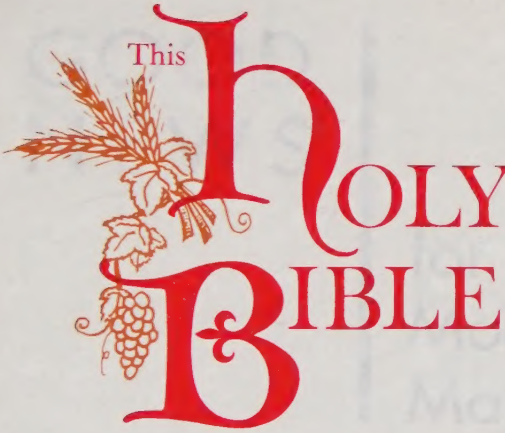
GOOD NEWS FOR MODERN MAN

The New Testament with Psalms
Today's English Version



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THE NEW TESTAMENT
AND PSALMS
in Today's English Version

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GOOD NEWS for Modern Man

THE NEW TESTAMENT
AND PSALMS
in Today's English Version

THOMAS NELSON INC.
NASHVILLE CAMDEN NEW YORK

GOOD NEWS FOR MODERN MAN

The New Testament (Third Edition)
and Psalms in
Today's English Version

THOMAS NELSON INC.
NASHVILLE CAMDEN NEW YORK
1972

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PREFACE

THE NEW TESTAMENT is the book about Jesus Christ. Its name means that it is the record of God's new covenant with his people. This covenant, or agreement, is the good news of God's promise to save those who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The New Testament does not merely inform; it demands decision and calls for commitment on the part of those who read this Good News.

The twenty-seven books which make up the New Testament were written by perhaps as many as twelve different authors over a period of some fifty years. Although the books differ in content, a constant theme runs through all of them and joins them into a unity—God's love for man revealed in the person of Jesus Christ.

The four Gospels tell the story of the life, teaching, deeds, death, and resurrection of Jesus. They are followed by the Acts of the Apostles, which traces the spread of the gospel for some thirty years, from Jerusalem to Rome, the capital of the Empire. The letters of Paul were all written to meet specific needs faced by early Christians. The eight books that follow, known as the General Letters, are varied: some of them are addressed in general terms to believers everywhere, while others are written to individual churches or persons.

The last book in the New Testament is different from all the others. Its teaching concerning the victory of the Kingdom of God and the lordship of Christ is conveyed by means of visions, images, and symbols, many of which are very difficult for the modern reader to understand. But its central message, which may also be taken as the theme of the whole New Testament, is clearly proclaimed: "The power to rule over the world belongs now to our Lord and his Messiah, and he will rule forever and ever!" (Revelation 11.15).

This translation of the New Testament has been prepared by the American Bible Society for people who speak English either as their mother tongue or as an

acquired language. As a distinctly new translation, it does not conform to traditional vocabulary or style, but seeks to express the meaning of the Greek text in words and forms accepted as standard by people everywhere who employ English as a means of communication. *Today's English Version* of the New Testament attempts to follow, in this century, the example set by the authors of the New Testament books who, for the most part, wrote in the standard, or common, form of the Greek language used throughout the Roman Empire. As much as possible, words and forms of English not in current use have been avoided; but no rigid limit has been set to the vocabulary employed.

A *Word List* at the end of the volume explains technical terms and rarely used words, and identifies a number of places and persons mentioned in the New Testament, in order to enable the reader to understand the text better in its historical setting. Some of the more important variations in Greek manuscripts and ancient versions, and some of the passages in the text which may be translated in more than one way, are listed in *Other Readings and Renderings*. An *Index* is provided which locates, by page numbers, some of the more important subjects, persons, places, and events in the New Testament. Finally there are a few line *Maps* designed to help the reader visualize the geographic setting of the countries and places mentioned in the New Testament.

The text from which this translation was made is the Greek New Testament prepared by an international committee of New Testament scholars, sponsored by several members of the United Bible Societies, and published in 1966. Verses marked with brackets [ ] are not in the oldest and best manuscripts of the New Testament.

The basic draft of this translation was prepared by Dr. Robert G. Bratcher. It was submitted to a panel of specialists for study and finally reviewed and approved by the Translations Committee of the American Bible Society. The line drawings were especially prepared by Miss Annie Vallotton to accompany the text.

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THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

The Family Record of Jesus Christ

(Also Luke 3.23–38)

1 This is the family record of Jesus Christ, who was a descendant of David, who was a descendant of Abraham.

[2]Abraham was the father of Isaac; Isaac was the father of Jacob; Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers; [3]Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah (their mother was Tamar); Perez was the father of Hezron; Hezron was the father of Ram; [4]Ram was the father of Amminadab; Amminadab was the father of Nahshon; Nahshon was the father of Salmon; [5]Salmon was the father of Boaz (Rahab was his mother); Boaz was the father of Obed (Ruth was his mother); Obed was the father of Jesse; [6]Jesse was the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon (his mother had been Uriah's wife); [7]Solomon was the father of Rehoboam; Rehoboam was the father of Abijah; Abijah was the father of Asa; [8]Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat; Jehoshaphat was the father of Joram; Joram was the father of Uzziah; [9]Uzziah was the father of Jotham; Jotham was the father of Ahaz; Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah; [10]Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh; Manasseh was the father of Amon; Amon was the father of Josiah; [11]Josiah was the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time when the people of Israel were carried away to Babylon.

[12]After the people were carried away to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel; Shealtiel was the father of Zerubbabel; [13]Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud; Abiud was the father of Eliakim; Eliakim was the father of Azor; [14]Azor was the father of Zadok; Zadok was the father of Achim; Achim was the father of Eliud; [15]Eliud was the father of Eleazar; Eleazar was the father of Matthan; Matthan was the father of Jacob; [16]Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, who was the mother of Jesus, called the Messiah.

[17]So then, there were fourteen sets of fathers and sons from Abraham to David, and fourteen from David to

the time when the people were carried away to Babylon, and fourteen from then to the birth of the Messiah.

The Birth of Jesus Christ

(Also Luke 2.1–7)

[18]This was the way that Jesus Christ was born. His mother Mary was engaged to Joseph, but before they were married she found out that she was going to have a baby by the Holy Spirit. [19]Joseph, to whom she was engaged, was a man who always did what was right; but he did not want to disgrace Mary publicly, so he made plans to break the engagement secretly. [20]While he was thinking about this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, descendant of David, do not be afraid to take Mary to be your wife. For it is by the Holy Spirit that she has conceived. [21]She will give birth to a son and you will name him Jesus—because he will save his people from their sins."

[22]Now all this happened in order to make come true what the Lord had said through the prophet, [23]"The virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and he will be called Emmanuel" (which means, "God is with us").

[24]So when Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do and married Mary. [25]But he had no sexual relations with her before she gave birth to her son. And Joseph named him Jesus.

Visitors from the East

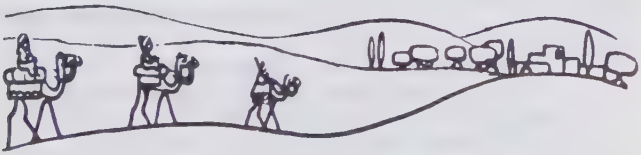
2 Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem, in the land of Judea, during the time when Herod was king. Soon afterwards some men who studied the stars came from the east to Jerusalem [2]and asked, "Where is the baby born to be the king of the Jews? We saw his star when it came up in the east, and we have come to worship him."

[3]When King Herod heard about this he was very upset, and so was everyone else in Jerusalem. [4]He called together all the chief priests and the teachers of the Law and asked them, "Where will the Messiah be born?"

[5]"In the town of Bethlehem, in Judea," they answered. "This is what the prophet wrote,

[6] 'Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
you are by no means the least among
the rulers of Judah;
for from you will come a leader
who will guide my people Israel.' "

[7]So Herod called the visitors from the east to a secret meeting and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. [8]Then he sent them to Bethlehem with these instructions: "Go and make a careful search for the child, and when you find him let me know, so that I may go and worship him too."



We saw his star

[9]With this they left, and on their way they saw the star—the same one they had seen in the east—and it went ahead of them until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. [10]How happy they were, what joy was theirs, when they saw the star! [11]They went into the house and saw the child with his mother Mary. They knelt down and worshiped him; then they opened their bags and offered him presents: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

[12]God warned them in a dream not to go back to Herod; so they went back to their country by another road.

The Escape to Egypt

13 After they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared
in a dream to Joseph and said, "Get up, take the child
and his mother and run away to Egypt, and stay there
until I tell you to leave. Herod will be looking for the
child to kill him."
14 Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and left
during the night for Egypt, 15 where he stayed until
Herod died.
This was done to make come true what the Lord had
said through the prophet, "I called my Son out of
Egypt."

The Killing of the Children

16 When Herod realized that the visitors from the east
had tricked him, he was furious. He gave orders to kill
all the boys in Bethlehem and its neighborhood who
were two years old and younger in accordance with
what he had learned from the visitors about the time
when the star had appeared.
17 In this way what the prophet Jeremiah had said
came true:
18 "A sound is heard in Ramah,
the sound of bitter crying and weeping.
Rachel weeps for her children;
she weeps and will not be comforted,
because they are all dead."

The Return from Egypt

19 After Herod had died, an angel of the Lord ap-
peared in a dream to Joseph, in Egypt, 20 and said, "Get
up, take the child and his mother, and go back to the
land of Israel, because those who tried to kill the child
are dead." 21 So Joseph got up, took the child and his
mother, and went back to Israel.
22 When he heard that Archelaus had succeeded his
father Herod as king of Judea, Joseph was afraid to settle
there. He was given more instructions in a dream, and
so he went to the province of Galilee 23 and made his
home in a town named Nazareth. He did this to make

come true what the prophets had said, "He will be called a Nazarene."

The Preaching of John the Baptist

(Also Mark 1.1–8; Luke 3.1–18; John 1.19–28)

3 At that time John the Baptist came and started preaching in the desert of Judea. 2"Turn away from your sins," he said, "because the Kingdom of heaven is near!" 3John was the one that the prophet Isaiah was talking about when he said,

"Someone is shouting in the desert,
'Get the Lord's road ready for him;
make a straight path for him to
travel!' "

4John's clothes were made of camel's hair; he wore a leather belt around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. 5People came to him from Jerusalem, from the whole province of Judea, and from all the country around the Jordan River. 6They confessed their sins and he baptized them in the Jordan.

7When John saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming to him to be baptized, he said to them, "You snakes —who told you that you could escape from God's wrath that is about to come? 8Do the things that will show that you have turned from your sins. 9And don't think you can excuse yourselves by saying, 'Abraham is our ancestor.' I tell you that God can take these rocks and make descendants for Abraham! 10The ax is ready to cut down the trees at the roots; every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown in the fire. 11I baptize you with water to show that you have repented; but the one who will come after me will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. He is much greater than I am; I am not good enough even to carry his sandals. 12He has his winnowing shovel with him, to thresh out all the grain; he will gather his wheat into his barn, but burn the chaff in a fire that never goes out."

The Baptism of Jesus

(Also Mark 1.9–11; Luke 3.21–22)

13At that time Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan, and came to John to be baptized by him. 14But John

tried to make him change his mind. "I ought to be baptized by you," John said, "yet you come to me!"

15But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so for now. For in this way we shall do all that God requires."

So John agreed. 16As soon as he was baptized, Jesus came up out of the water. Then heaven was opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and lighting on him. 17And then a voice said from heaven, "This is my own dear Son, with whom I am well pleased."

The Temptation of Jesus

(Also Mark 1.12–13; Luke 4.1–13)

4 Then the Spirit led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by the Devil. 2After spending forty days and nights without food, Jesus was hungry. 3The Devil came to him and said, "If you are God's Son, order these stones to turn into bread."

4Jesus answered, "The scripture says, 'Man cannot live on bread alone, but on every word that God speaks.'"

Order these stones to turn into bread

5Then the Devil took Jesus to the Holy City, set him
on the highest point of the temple, 6and said to him, "If
you are God's Son, throw yourself down to the ground;
because the scripture says,

'God will give orders to his angels about
you;
they will hold you up with their hands,
so that not even your feet will be hurt
on the stones.'"

7Jesus answered, "But the scripture also says, 'You
must not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

8Then the Devil took Jesus to a very high mountain
and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, in all
their greatness. 9"All this I will give you," the Devil
said, "if you kneel down and worship me."

10Then Jesus answered, "Go away, Satan! The scrip-
ture says, 'Worship the Lord your God and serve only
him!'"

11Then the Devil left him; and angels came and
helped Jesus.

Jesus Begins His Work in Galilee

(Also Mark 1.14–15; Luke 4.14–15)

12When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison,
he went away to Galilee. 13He did not settle down in
Nazareth, but went and lived in Capernaum, a town by
Lake Galilee, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali.
14This was done to make come true what the prophet
Isaiah had said,

15 "Land of Zebulun, and land of Naphtali,
in the direction of the sea, on the other
side of the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles!
16 The people who live in darkness
will see a great light.
On those who live in the dark land of
death
the light will shine."

17From that time Jesus began to preach his message,
"Turn away from your sins, because the Kingdom of
heaven is near!"

Jesus Calls Four Fishermen

(Also Mark 1.16–20; Luke 5.1–11)

18 As Jesus walked by Lake Galilee, he saw two brothers who were fishermen, Simon (called Peter) and his
brother Andrew, catching fish in the lake with a net.
19 Jesus said to them, "Come with me and I will teach
you to catch men." 20 At once they left their nets and
went with him.
21 He went on and saw two other brothers, James
and John, the sons of Zebedee. They were in their boat
with their father Zebedee, getting their nets ready.
Jesus called them; 22 at once they left the boat and their
father, and went with Jesus.

Jesus Teaches, Preaches, and Heals

(Also Luke 6.17–19)

23 Jesus went all over Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the Good News of the Kingdom, and
healing people from every kind of disease and sickness.
24 The news about him spread through the whole country
of Syria, so that people brought him all those who were
sick with all kinds of diseases, and afflicted with all sorts
of troubles: people with demons, and epileptics, and

Jesus healed them all

paralytics—Jesus healed them all. [25]Great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Ten Towns, from Jerusalem, Judea, and the land on the other side of the Jordan.

The Sermon on the Mount

5 Jesus saw the crowds and went up a hill, where he sat down. His disciples gathered around him, [2]and he began to teach them:

True Happiness

(Also Luke 6.20–23)

[3] "Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor;
the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!
[4] "Happy are those who mourn;
God will comfort them!
[5] "Happy are the meek;
they will receive what God has promised!
[6] "Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires;
God will satisfy them fully!
[7] "Happy are those who are merciful to others;
God will be merciful to them!
[8] "Happy are the pure in heart;
they will see God!
[9] "Happy are those who work for peace among men;
God will call them his sons!
[10] "Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires;
the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!
[11] "Happy are you when men insult you, and persecute you, and tell all kinds of evil lies against you because you are my followers. [12]Be glad and happy, because a great reward is kept for you in heaven. This is how men persecuted the prophets who lived before you."

Salt and Light
(Also Mark 9.50; Luke 14.34–35)

13 "You are like salt for all mankind. But if salt loses
its taste, there is no way to make it salty again. It has
become worthless, so it is thrown away and people walk
on it.
14 "You are like light for the whole world. A city
built on a hill cannot be hid. 15 No one lights a lamp to
put it under a bowl; instead he puts it on the lamp-
stand, where it gives light for everyone in the house.
16 In the same way your light must shine before people,
so that they will see the good things you do and give
praise to your Father in heaven."

Teaching about the Law

17 "Do not think that I have come to do away with the
Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets. I have
not come to do away with them, but to make their
teachings come true. 18 Remember this! As long as
heaven and earth last, the least point or the smallest
detail of the Law will not be done away with—not until
the end of all things. 19 So then, whoever disobeys even
the smallest of the commandments, and teaches others
to do the same, will be least in the Kingdom of heaven.
On the other hand, whoever obeys the Law, and teaches
others to do the same, will be great in the Kingdom of
heaven. 20 I tell you, then, that you will be able to enter
the Kingdom of heaven only if you are more faithful
than the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees in doing
what God requires."

Teaching about Anger

21 "You have heard that men were told in the past, 'Do
not murder; anyone who commits murder will be
brought before the judge.' 22 But now I tell you: whoever
is angry with his brother will be brought before the
judge; whoever calls his brother 'You good-for-nothing!'
will be brought before the Council; and whoever calls his
brother a worthless fool will be in danger of going to the
fire of hell. 23 So if you are about to offer your gift to God
at the altar and there you remember that your brother
has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in

front of the altar and go at once to make peace with your brother: then come back and offer your gift to God.

25"If a man brings a lawsuit against you and takes you to court, be friendly with him while there is time, before you get to court; once you are there he will turn you over to the judge, who will hand you over to the police, and you will be put in jail. 26There you will stay, I tell you, until you pay the last penny of your fine."

Teaching about Adultery

27"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' 28But now I tell you: anyone who looks at a woman and wants to possess her is guilty of committing adultery with her in his heart. 29So if your right eye causes you to sin, take it out and throw it away! It is much better for you to lose a part of your body than to have your whole body thrown into hell. 30If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away! It is much better for you to lose one of your limbs than to have your whole body go off to hell."

Teaching about Divorce

(Also Matt. 19.9; Mark 10.11–12; Luke 16.18)

31"It was also said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a written notice of divorce.' 32But now I tell you: if a man divorces his wife, and she has not been unfaithful, then he is guilty of making her commit adultery if she marries again; and the man who marries her also commits adultery."

Teaching about Vows

33"You have also heard that men were told in the past, 'Do not break your promise, but do what you have sworn to the Lord to do.' 34But now I tell you: do not use any vow when you make a promise; do not swear by heaven, because it is God's throne; 35nor by earth, because it is the resting place for his feet; nor by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King. 36Do not even swear by your head, because you cannot make a single hair white or black. 37Just say 'Yes' or 'No'—anything else you have to say comes from the Evil One."

Teaching about Revenge

(Also Luke 6.29–30)

38"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye,
and a tooth for a tooth.' 39But now I tell you: do not take
revenge on someone who does you wrong. If anyone
slaps you on the right cheek, let him slap your left cheek
too. 40And if someone takes you to court to sue you for
your shirt, let him have your coat as well. 41And if one
of the occupation troops forces you to carry his pack one
mile, carry it another mile. 42When someone asks you
for something, give it to him; when someone wants to
borrow something, lend it to him."

When someone wants to borrow something, lend it to him

Love for Enemies

(Also Luke 6.27–28, 32–36)

43"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your
friends, hate your enemies.' 44But now I tell you: love
your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you,
45so that you will become the sons of your Father in
heaven. For he makes his sun to shine on bad and good
people alike, and gives rain to those who do good and
those who do evil. 46Why should God reward you if you
love only the people who love you? Even the tax collec-
tors do that! 47And if you speak only to your friends,
have you done anything out of the ordinary? Even the

pagans do that! [48]You must be perfect—just as your Father in heaven is perfect."

Teaching about Charity

6 "Be careful not to perform your religious duties in public so that people will see what you do. If you do these things publicly you will not have any reward from your Father in heaven.

[2]"So when you give something to a needy person, do not make a big show of it, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets. They do it so that people will praise them. Remember this! They have already been paid in full. [3]But when you help a needy person, do it in such a way that even your closest friend will not know about it, [4]but it will be a private matter. And your Father, who sees what you do in private, will reward you."

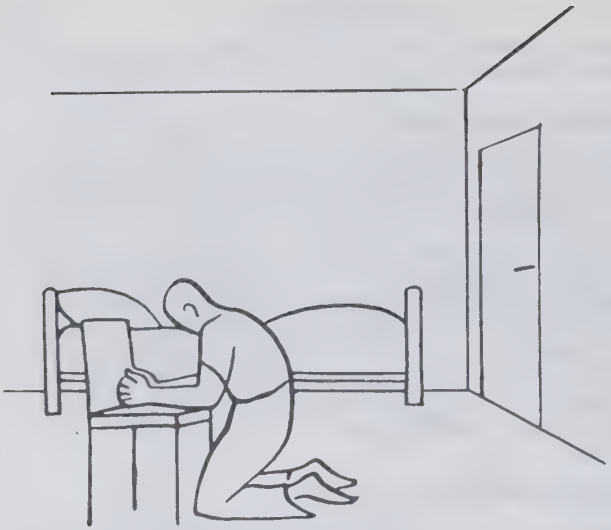
Teaching about Prayer

(Also Luke 11.2–4)

[5]"When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites! They love to stand up and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that everyone will see them. Remember this! They have already been paid in full. [6]But when you pray, go to your room and close the door, and pray to your Father, who is unseen. And your Father, who sees what you do in private, will reward you.

[7]"In your prayers do not use a lot of meaningless words, as the pagans do, who think that God will hear them because of their long prayers. [8]Do not be like them; your Father already knows what you need before you ask him. [9]This, then, is how you should pray:

'Our Father in heaven:
May your holy name be honored;
[10] may your Kingdom come;
may your will be done on earth as it is
in heaven.
[11] Give us today the food we need.
[12] Forgive us the wrongs that we have done,
as we forgive the wrongs that others
have done us.
[13] Do not bring us to hard testing,
but keep us safe from the Evil One.'



Pray to your Father, who is unseen

14"If you forgive others the wrongs they have done
you, your Father in heaven will also forgive you. 15But
if you do not forgive the wrongs of others, then your
Father in heaven will not forgive the wrongs you have
done."

Teaching about Fasting

16"And when you fast, do not put on a sad face as the
hypocrites do. They go around with a hungry look so
that everyone will see that they are fasting. Remember
this! They have already been paid in full. 17When you
go without food, wash your face and comb your hair,
18so that others cannot know that you are fasting only
your Father, who is unseen, will know. And your
Father, who sees what you do in private, will reward
you."

Riches in Heaven

(Also Luke 12.33–34)

19"Do not save riches for yourselves here on earth,

where moths and rust destroy, and robbers break in and steal. [20]Instead, save riches for yourselves in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and robbers cannot break in and steal. [21]For your heart will always be where your riches are."

The Light of the Body

(Also Luke 11.34–36)

[22]"The eyes are like a lamp for the body. If your eyes are clear, your whole body will be full of light; [23]but if your eyes are bad, your body will be in darkness. So if the light in you is darkness, how terribly dark it will be!"

God and Possessions

(Also Luke 16.13; 12.22–31)

[24]"No one can be a slave to two masters; he will hate one and love the other; he will be loyal to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

[25]"This is why I tell you: do not be worried about the food and drink you need to stay alive, or about clothes for your body. After all, isn't life worth more than food? And isn't the body worth more than clothes? [26]Look at the birds flying around: they do not plant seeds, gather a harvest, and put it in barns; your Father in heaven takes care of them! Aren't you worth much more than birds? [27]Which one of you can live a few more years by worrying about it?

[28]"And why worry about clothes? Look how the wild flowers grow: they do not work or make clothes for themselves. [29]But I tell you that not even Solomon, as rich as he was, had clothes as beautiful as one of these flowers. [30]It is God who clothes the wild grass—grass that is here today, gone tomorrow, burned up in the oven. Won't he be all the more sure to clothe you? How little faith you have! [31]So do not start worrying: 'Where will my food come from? or my drink? or my clothes?' [32](These are the things the heathen are always concerned about.) Your Father in heaven knows that you need all these things. [33]Instead, be concerned above everything else with his Kingdom and with what he

requires, and he will provide you with all these other things. [34]So do not worry about tomorrow; it will have enough worries of its own. There is no need to add to the troubles each day brings."

Judging Others

(Also Luke 6.37–38, 41–42)

7 "Do not judge others, so that God will not judge you— [2]because God will judge you in the same way you judge others, and he will apply to you the same rules you apply to others. [3]Why, then, do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, and pay no attention to the log in your own eye? [4]How dare you say to your brother, 'Please, let me take that speck out of your eye,' when you have a log in your own eye? [5]You hypocrite! Take the log out of your own eye first, and then you will be able to see and take the speck out of your brother's eye.

[6]"Do not give what is holy to dogs—they will only turn and attack you; do not throw your pearls in front of pigs—they will only trample them underfoot."

Ask, Seek, Knock

(Also Luke 11.9–13)

[7]"Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. [8]For everyone who asks will receive, and he who seeks will find, and the door will be opened to him who knocks. [9]Would any of you who are fathers give your son a stone, when he asks you for bread? [10]Or would you give him a snake, when he asks you for fish? [11]As bad as you are, you know how to give good things to your children. How much more, then, your Father in heaven will give good things to those who ask him!

[12]"Do for others what you want them to do for you: this is the meaning of the Law of Moses and the teaching of the prophets."

The Narrow Gate

(Also Luke 13.24)

[13]"Go in through the narrow gate, because the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to hell, and there

are many who travel it. 14The gate is narrow and the way
is hard that leads to life, and few people find it."

A Tree and Its Fruit

(Also Luke 6.43–44)

15"Watch out for false prophets; they come to you
looking like sheep on the outside, but they are really like
wild wolves on the inside. 16You will know them by the
way they act. Thorn bushes do not bear grapes, and
briers do not bear figs. 17A healthy tree bears good fruit,
while a poor tree bears bad fruit. 18A healthy tree cannot
bear bad fruit, and a poor tree cannot bear good fruit.
19Any tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and
thrown in the fire. 20So, then, you will know the false
prophets by the way they act."

I Never Knew You

(Also Luke 13.25–27)

21"Not everyone who calls me 'Lord, Lord,' will enter
into the Kingdom of heaven, but only those who do
what my Father in heaven wants them to do. 22When
that Day comes, many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord! In
your name we spoke God's message, by your name we
drove out many demons and performed many miracles!'
23Then I will say to them, 'I never knew you. Away from
me, you evildoers!' "

The Two House Builders

(Also Luke 6.47–49)

24"So then, everyone who hears these words of mine
and obeys them will be like a wise man who built his
house on the rock. 25The rain poured down, the rivers
flooded over, and the winds blew hard against that
house. But it did not fall, because it had been built on
the rock.

26"But everyone who hears these words of mine and
does not obey them will be like a foolish man who built
his house on the sand. 27The rain poured down, the
rivers flooded over, the winds blew hard against that
house, and it fell. What a terrible fall that was!"

The Authority of Jesus

28 Jesus finished saying these things, and the crowd
was amazed at the way he taught. 29 He wasn't like their
teachers of the Law; instead, he taught with authority.

Jesus Makes a Leper Clean

(Also Mark 1.40–45; Luke 5.12–16)

8 Jesus came down from the hill, and large crowds
followed him. 2 Then a leper came to him, knelt
down before him, and said, "Sir, if you want to, you can
make me clean."

3 Jesus reached out and touched him. "I do want to,"
he answered. "Be clean!" At once he was clean from his
leprosy. 4 Then Jesus said to him, "Listen! Don't tell
anyone, but go straight to the priest and let him examine
you; then offer the sacrifice that Moses ordered, to prove
to everyone that you are now clean."

Jesus Heals a Roman Officer's Servant

(Also Luke 7.1–10)

5 When Jesus entered Capernaum, a Roman officer
met him and begged for help: 6 "Sir, my servant is at
home, sick in bed, unable to move and suffering terri-
bly."

7 "I will go and make him well," Jesus said.

8 "Oh no, sir," answered the officer. "I do not deserve
to have you come into my house. Just give the order and
my servant will get well. 9 I, too, am a man under the
authority of superior officers, and I have soldiers under
me. I order this one, 'Go!' and he goes; and I order that
one, 'Come!' and he comes; and I order my slave, 'Do
this!' and he does it."

10 Jesus was surprised when he heard this, and said to
the people who were following him, "I tell you, I have
never seen such faith as this in anyone in Israel.
11 Remember this! Many will come from the east and the
west and sit down at the table in the Kingdom of heaven
with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 12 But those who should
be in the Kingdom will be thrown out into the darkness
outside, where they will cry and gnash their teeth."
13 And Jesus said to the officer, "Go home, and what you
believe will be done for you."

And the officer's servant was healed that very hour.

Jesus Heals Many People

(Also Mark 1.29–34; Luke 4.38–41)

[14]Jesus went to Peter's home, and there he saw Peter's mother-in-law sick in bed with a fever. [15]He touched her hand; the fever left her, and she got up and began to wait on him.

[16]When evening came, people brought to Jesus many who had demons in them. Jesus drove out the evil spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. [17]He did this to make come true what the prophet Isaiah had said, "He himself took our illnesses and carried away our diseases."

The Would-Be Followers of Jesus

(Also Luke 9.57–62)

[18]Jesus noticed the crowd around him and ordered his disciples to go to the other side of the lake. [19]A teacher of the Law came to him. "Teacher," he said, "I am ready to go with you wherever you go."

[20]Jesus answered him, "Foxes have holes, and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lie down and rest."

[21]Another man, who was a disciple, said, "Sir, first let me go back and bury my father."

[22]"Follow me," Jesus answered, "and let the dead bury their own dead."

Jesus Calms a Storm

(Also Mark 4.35–41; Luke 8.22–25)

[23]Jesus got into the boat, and his disciples went with him. [24]Suddenly a fierce storm hit the lake, so that the waves covered the boat. But Jesus was asleep. [25]The disciples went to him and woke him up. "Save us, Lord!" they said. "We are about to die!"

[26]"Why are you so frightened?" Jesus answered. "How little faith you have!" Then he got up and gave a command to the winds and to the waves, and there was a great calm.

27 Everyone was amazed. "What kind of man is this?"
they said. "Even the winds and the waves obey him!"

Jesus Heals Two Men with Demons

(Also Mark 5.1–20; Luke 8.26–39)

28 Jesus came to the territory of the Gadarenes, on the
other side of the lake, and was met by two men who
came out of the burial caves. These men had demons in
them and were so fierce that no one dared travel on that
road. 29 At once they screamed, "What do you want with
us, Son of God? Have you come to punish us before the
right time?"

30 Not far away a large herd of pigs was feeding.
31 The demons begged Jesus, "If you are going to drive
us out, send us into that herd of pigs."

32 "Go," Jesus told them; so they left and went off
into the pigs. The whole herd rushed down the side of
the cliff into the lake and were drowned.

33 The men who had been taking care of the pigs ran
away and went to the town, where they told the whole
story, and what had happened to the men with the
demons. 34 So everyone from the town went out to
meet Jesus; and when they saw him they begged him
to leave their territory.

Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man

(Also Mark 2.1–12; Luke 5.17–26)

9 Jesus got into the boat, went back across the lake,
and came to his own town. 2 Some people brought
him a paralyzed man, lying on a bed. Jesus saw how
much faith they had, and said to the paralyzed man,
"Courage, my son! Your sins are forgiven."

3 Then some teachers of the Law said to themselves,
"This man is talking against God!"

4 Jesus knew what they were thinking and said, "Why
are you thinking such evil things? 5 Is it easier to say,
'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? 6 I
will prove to you, then, that the Son of Man has au-
thority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the par-
alyzed man, "Get up, pick up your bed, and go home!"

7 The man got up and went home. 8 When the people
saw it, they were afraid, and praised God for giving such
authority as this to men.

Jesus Calls Matthew

(Also Mark 2.13–17; Luke 5.27–32)

9 Jesus left that place, and as he walked along he saw
a tax collector, named Matthew, sitting in his office. He
said to him, "Follow me."
Matthew got up and followed him.
10 While Jesus was having dinner at his house, many
tax collectors and outcasts came and joined him and
his disciples at the table. 11 Some Pharisees saw this
and said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat
with tax collectors and outcasts?"
12 Jesus heard them and answered, "People who are
well do not need a doctor, but only those who are sick.
13 Go and find out what this scripture means, 'I do not
want animal sacrifices, but kindness.' I have not come
to call the respectable people, but the outcasts."

The Question about Fasting

(Also Mark 2.18–22; Luke 5.33–39)

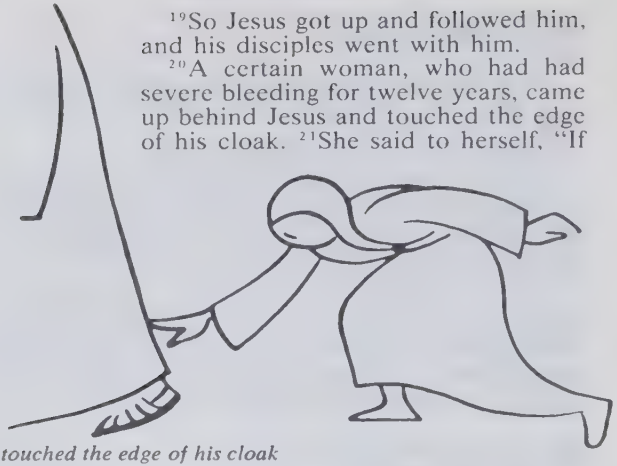
14 Then the followers of John the Baptist came to
Jesus, asking, "Why is it that we and the Pharisees fast
often, but your disciples don't fast at all?"
15 Jesus answered, "Do you expect the guests at a
wedding party to be sad as long as the bridegroom is
with them? Of course not! But the time will come when
the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then
they will go without food.
16 "No one patches up an old coat with a piece of new
cloth, because such a patch tears off from the coat,
making an even bigger hole. 17 Nor does anyone pour
new wine into used wineskins. If he does, the skins will
burst, and then the wine pours out and the skins will be
ruined. Instead, new wine is poured into fresh wine-
skins, and both will keep in good condition."

The Official's Daughter and the Woman Who Touched Jesus' Cloak

(Also Mark 5.21–43; Luke 8.40–56)

18 While Jesus was saying this to them, a Jewish offi-
cial came to him, knelt down before him, and said, "My
daughter has just died; but come and place your hand on
her and she will live."

[19]So Jesus got up and followed him,
and his disciples went with him.
[20]A certain woman, who had had
severe bleeding for twelve years, came
up behind Jesus and touched the edge
of his cloak. [21]She said to herself, "If



And touched the edge of his cloak

only I touch his cloak I will get well."
[22]Jesus turned around and saw her, and said, "Courage, my daughter! Your faith has made you well." At that very moment the woman became well.
[23]So Jesus went into the official's house. When he saw the musicians for the funeral, and the people all stirred up, [24]he said, "Get out, everybody! The little girl is not dead—she is only sleeping!"
They all started making fun of him. [25]As soon as the people had been put out, Jesus went into the girl's room and took hold of her hand, and she got up. [26]The news about this spread all over that part of the country.

Jesus Heals Two Blind Men

[27]Jesus left that place, and as he walked along two blind men started following him. "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" they shouted.
[28]When Jesus had gone indoors, the two blind men came to him and he asked them, "Do you believe that I can do this?"
"Yes, sir!" they answered.
[29]Then Jesus touched their eyes and said, "May it

happen, then, just as you believe!"—[30]and their sight was restored. Jesus spoke harshly to them, "Don't tell this to anyone!"

[31]But they left and spread the news about Jesus all over that part of the country.

Jesus Heals a Dumb Man

[32]As the men were leaving, some people brought to Jesus a man who could not talk because he had a demon. [33]As soon as the demon was driven out, the man started talking. Everyone was amazed. "We never saw the like in Israel!" they exclaimed.

[34]But the Pharisees said, "It is the chief of the demons who gives him the power to drive them out."

Jesus Has Pity for the People

[35]So Jesus went around visiting all the towns and villages. He taught in their synagogues, preached the Good News of the Kingdom, and healed people from every kind of disease and sickness. [36]As he saw the crowds, his heart was filled with pity for them, because they were worried and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. [37]So he said to his disciples, "There is a large harvest, but few workers to gather it in. [38]Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest."

The Twelve Apostles

(Also Mark 3.13–19; Luke 6.12–16)

10 Jesus called his twelve disciples together and gave them authority to drive out the evil spirits and to heal every disease and every sickness. [2]These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James and his brother John, the sons of Zebedee; [3]Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew, the tax collector; James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; [4]Simon the Patriot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus.

The Mission of the Twelve

(Also Mark 6.7–13; Luke 9.1–6)

[5]Jesus sent these twelve men out with the following

instructions: "Do not go to any Gentile territory or any Samaritan towns. [6]Go, instead, to the lost sheep of the people of Israel. [7]Go and preach, 'The Kingdom of heaven is near!' [8]Heal the sick, raise the dead, make the lepers clean, drive out demons. You have received without paying, so give without being paid. [9]Do not carry any gold, silver, or copper money in your pockets; [10]do not carry a beggar's bag for the trip, or an extra shirt, or shoes, or a walking stick. A worker should be given what he needs.

[11]"When you come to a town or village, go in and look for someone who is willing to welcome you, and stay with him until you leave that place. [12]When you go into a house say, 'Peace be with you.' [13]If the people in that house welcome you, let your greeting of peace remain; but if they do not welcome you, then take back your greeting. [14]And if some home or town will not welcome you or listen to you, then leave that place and shake the dust off your feet. [15]Remember this! On the Judgment Day God will show more mercy to the people of Sodom and Gomorrah than to the people of that town!"

Coming Persecutions

(Also Mark 13.9–13; Luke 21.12–17)

[16]"Listen! I am sending you just like sheep to a pack of wolves. You must be as cautious as snakes and as gentle as doves. [17]Watch out, for there will be men who will arrest you and take you to court, and they will whip you in their synagogues. [18]You will be brought to trial before rulers and kings for my sake, to tell the Good News to them and to the Gentiles. [19]When they bring you to trial, do not worry about what you are going to say or how you will say it; when the time comes, you will be given what you will say. [20]For the words you speak will not be yours; they will come from the Spirit of your Father speaking in you.

[21]"Men will hand over their own brothers to be put to death, and fathers will do the same to their children; children will turn against their parents and have them put to death. [22]Everyone will hate you, because of me. But whoever holds out to the end will be saved. [23]And when they persecute you in one town, run away to an-

other one. I tell you, you will not finish your work in all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

24"No pupil is greater than his teacher; no slave is greater than his master. 25So a pupil should be satisfied to become like his teacher, and a slave like his master. If the head of the family is called Beelzebul, the members of the family will be called by even worse names!"

Whom to Fear

(Also Luke 12.2–7)

26"Do not be afraid of men, then. Whatever is covered up will be uncovered, and every secret will be made known. 27What I am telling you in the dark you must repeat in broad daylight, and what you have heard in private you must tell from the housetops. 28Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather be afraid of God, who can destroy both body and soul in hell. 29You can buy two sparrows for a penny; yet not a single one of them falls to the ground without your Father's consent. 30As for you, even the hairs of your head have all been counted. 31So do not be afraid; you are worth much more than many sparrows!"

Confessing and Denying Christ

(Also Luke 12.8–9)

32"Whoever declares publicly that he belongs to me, I will do the same for him before my Father in heaven. 33But whoever denies publicly that he belongs to me, then I will deny him before my Father in heaven."

Not Peace, but a Sword

(Also Luke 12.51–53; 14.26–27)

34"Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the world; no, I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35I came to set sons against their fathers, daughters against their mothers, daughters-in-law against their mothers-in-law; 36a man's worst enemies will be the members of his own family.

37"Whoever loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; whoever loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38Whoever does not take up his cross and follow in my steps is not worthy

of me. [39]Whoever tries to gain his own life will lose it;
whoever loses his life for my sake will gain it."

Rewards

(Also Mark 9.41)

[40]"Whoever welcomes you, welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me, welcomes the one who sent me. [41]Whoever welcomes God's messenger because he is God's messenger will share in his reward; and whoever welcomes a truly good man, because he is that, will share in his reward. [42]And remember this! Whoever gives even a drink of cold water to one of the least of these my followers, because he is my follower, will certainly receive his reward."

Whoever gives even a drink of cold water

The Messengers from John the Baptist

(Also Luke 7.18–35)

11 When Jesus finished giving these instructions to his twelve disciples, he left that place and went on to teach and preach in the towns near there.

[2]When John the Baptist heard in prison about Christ's works, he sent some of his disciples to him. [3]"Tell us," they asked Jesus, "are you the one John said was going to come, or should we expect someone else?"

[4]Jesus answered, "Go back and tell John what you are
hearing and seeing: [5]the blind can see, the lame can
walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead
are raised to life, and the Good News is preached to the
poor. [6]How happy is he who has no doubts about
me!"

[7]While John's disciples were going back, Jesus spoke
about John to the crowds. "When you went out to
John in the desert, what did you expect to see? A
blade of grass bending in the wind? [8]What did you go
out to see? A man dressed up in fancy clothes? People
who dress like that live in palaces! [9]Tell me, what did
you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you—you saw
much more than a prophet. [10]For John is the one of
whom the scripture says: 'Here is my messenger, says
God; I will send him ahead of you to open the way for
you.' [11]Remember this! John the Baptist is greater
than any man who has ever lived. But he who is least
in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he. [12]From
the time John preached his message until this very day
the Kingdom of heaven has suffered violent attacks,
and violent men try to seize it. [13]All the prophets and
the Law of Moses, until the time of John, spoke about
the Kingdom; [14]and if you are willing to believe their
message, John is Elijah, whose coming was predicted.
[15]Listen, then, if you have ears!

[16]"Now, to what can I compare the people of this
day? They are like children sitting in the market place.
One group shouts to the other, [17]'We played wedding
music for you, but you would not dance! We sang
funeral songs, but you would not cry!' [18]John came,
and he fasted and drank no wine, and everyone said,
'He has a demon in him!' [19]The Son of Man came, and
he ate and drank, and everyone said, 'Look at this
man! He is a glutton and wine-drinker, a friend of tax
collectors and outcasts!' God's wisdom, however, is
shown to be true by its results."

The Unbelieving Towns

(Also Luke 10.13–15)

[20]Then Jesus began to reproach the towns where he
had performed most of his miracles, because the people
had not turned from their sins. [21]"How terrible it will be

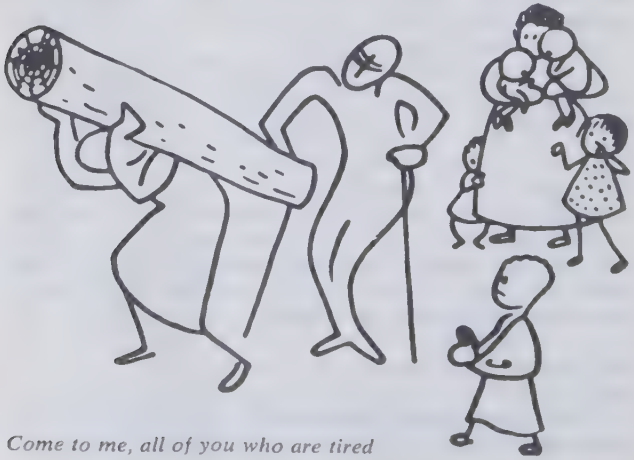
for you, Chorazin! How terrible for you too, Bethsaida! If the miracles which were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, long ago the people there would have put on sackcloth, and sprinkled ashes on themselves to show they had turned from their sins! 22Remember, then, that on the Judgment Day God will show more mercy to the people of Tyre and Sidon than to you! 23And as for you, Capernaum! You wanted to lift yourself up to heaven? You will be thrown down to hell! If the miracles which were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would still be in existence today! 24Remember, then, that on the Judgment Day God will show more mercy to Sodom than to you!"

Come to Me and Rest

(Also Luke 10.21–22)

25At that time Jesus said, "Father, Lord of heaven and earth! I thank you because you have shown to the unlearned what you have hidden from the wise and learned. 26Yes, Father, this was done by your own choice and pleasure.

27"My Father has given me all things. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father



Come to me, all of you who are tired

except the Son, and those to whom the Son wants to reveal him.

[28]"Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying your heavy loads, and I will give you rest. [29]Take my yoke and put it on you, and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit; and you will find rest. [30]The yoke I will give you is easy, and the load I will put on you is light."

The Question about the Sabbath

(Also Mark 2.23–28; Luke 6.1–5)

12 Not long afterward Jesus was walking through the wheat fields on a Sabbath day. His disciples were hungry, so they began to pick heads of wheat and eat the grain. [2]When the Pharisees saw this, they said to Jesus, "Look, it is against our Law for your disciples to do this on the Sabbath!"

[3]Jesus answered, "Have you never read what David did that time when he and his men were hungry? [4]He went into the house of God, and he and his men ate the bread offered to God, even though it was against the Law for them to eat that bread—only the priests were allowed to eat it. [5]Or have you not read in the Law of Moses that every Sabbath the priests in the temple actually break the Sabbath law, yet they are not guilty? [6]There is something here, I tell you, greater than the temple. [7]The scripture says, 'I do not want animal sacrifices, but kindness.' If you really knew what this means, you would not condemn people who are not guilty; [8]because the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

The Man with a Crippled Hand

(Also Mark 3.1–6; Luke 6.6–11)

[9]Jesus left that place and went to one of their synagogues. [10]A man was there who had a crippled hand. There were some men present who wanted to accuse Jesus of wrongdoing; so they asked him, "Is it against our Law to cure on the Sabbath?"

[11]Jesus answered, "What if one of you has a sheep and it falls into a deep hole on the Sabbath? Will you not take hold of it and lift it out? [12]And a man is worth much more than a sheep! So then, our Law does allow us to

help someone on the Sabbath." [13]Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand."

He stretched it out, and it became well again, just like the other one. [14]The Pharisees left and made plans against Jesus to kill him.

God's Chosen Servant

[15]When Jesus heard about it, he went away from that place; and many people followed him. He healed all the sick, [16]and gave them orders not to tell others about him, [17]to make come true what God had said through the prophet Isaiah,

[18] "Here is my servant, whom I have chosen,
the one I love, with whom I am well pleased.
I will put my Spirit on him,
and he will announce my judgment to all peoples.
[19] But he will not argue or shout,
nor make loud speeches in the streets.
[20] He will not break off a bent reed,
nor put out a flickering lamp.
He will persist until he causes justice to triumph;
[21] and all peoples will put their hope in him."

Jesus and Beelzebul

(Also Mark 3.20–30; Luke 11.14–23)

[22]Then some people brought to Jesus a man who was blind and could not talk because he had a demon. Jesus healed the man, so that he was able to talk and see. [23]The crowds were all amazed. "Could he be the Son of David?" they asked.

[24]When the Pharisees heard this they replied, "He drives out demons only because their ruler Beelzebul gives him power to do so."

[25]Jesus knew what they were thinking and said to them, "Any country that divides itself into groups that fight each other will not last very long. And any town or family that divides itself into groups that fight each other will fall apart. [26]So if one group is fighting another in Satan's kingdom, this means that it is already divided into groups and will soon fall apart! [27]You say

that I drive out demons because Beelzebul gives me the power to do so. Well, then, who gives your followers the power to drive them out? Your own followers prove that you are wrong! [28]No, it is God's Spirit who gives me the power to drive out demons, which proves that the Kingdom of God has already come upon you.

[29]"No one can break into a strong man's house and take away his belongings unless he ties up the strong man first; then he can plunder his house.

[30]"Anyone who is not for me is really against me; anyone who does not help me gather is really scattering. [31]For this reason I tell you: men can be forgiven any sin and any evil thing they say; but whoever says evil things against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. [32]Anyone who says something against the Son of Man can be forgiven; but whoever says something against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven—now or ever."

A Tree and Its Fruit

(Also Luke 6.43–45)

[33]"To have good fruit you must have a healthy tree; if you have a poor tree you will have bad fruit. For a tree is known by the kind of fruit it bears. [34]You snakes—how can you say good things when you are evil? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. [35]A good man brings good things out of his treasure of good things; a bad man brings bad things out of his treasure of bad things.

[36]"I tell you this: on the Judgment Day everyone will have to give account of every useless word he has ever spoken. [37]For your words will be used to judge you, either to declare you innocent or to declare you guilty."

The Demand for a Miracle

(Also Mark 8.11–12; Luke 11.29–32)

[38]Then some teachers of the Law and some Pharisees spoke up. "Teacher," they said, "we want to see you perform a miracle."

[39]"How evil and godless are the people of this day!" Jesus exclaimed. "You ask me for a miracle? No! The only miracle you will be given is the miracle of the prophet Jonah. [40]In the same way that Jonah spent three days and nights in the belly of the big fish, so will the

Son of Man spend three days and nights in the depths of the earth. [41]On the Judgment Day the people of Nineveh will stand up and accuse you, because they turned from their sins when they heard Jonah preach; and there is something here, I tell you, greater than Jonah! [42]On the Judgment Day the Queen from the South will stand up and accuse you, because she traveled halfway around the world to listen to Solomon's wise teaching; and there is something here, I tell you, greater than Solomon!"

The Return of the Evil Spirit

(Also Luke 11.24–26)

[43]"When an evil spirit goes out of a man, it travels over dry country looking for a place to rest. If it can't find one, [44]it says to itself, 'I will go back to my house which I left.' So it goes back and finds the house empty, clean, and all fixed up. [45]Then it goes out and brings along seven other spirits even worse than itself, and they come and live there. So that man is in worse shape, when it is all over, than he was at the beginning. This is the way it will happen to the evil people of this day."

Jesus' Mother and Brothers

(Also Mark 3.31–35; Luke 8.19–21)

[46]Jesus was still talking to the people when his mother and brothers arrived. They stood outside, asking to speak with him. [47]So one of the people there said to him, "Look, your mother and brothers are standing outside, and they want to speak with you."

[48]Jesus answered, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" [49]Then he pointed to his disciples and said, "Look! Here are my mother and my brothers! [50]Whoever does what my Father in heaven wants him to do is my brother, my sister, my mother."

The Parable of the Sower

(Also Mark 4.1–9; Luke 8.4–8)

13 That same day Jesus left the house and went to the lakeside, where he sat down to teach. [2]The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it, while the crowd stood on the shore. [3]He used parables to tell them many things.

"There was a man who went out to sow. 4As he scattered the seed in the field, some of it fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5Some of it fell on rocky ground, where there was little soil. The seeds soon sprouted, because the soil wasn't deep. 6When the sun came up it burned the young plants, and because the roots had not grown deep enough the plants soon dried up. 7Some of the seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8But some seeds fell in good soil, and bore grain: some had one hundred grains, others sixty, and others thirty."

9And Jesus concluded, "Listen, then, if you have ears!"

The Purpose of the Parables

(Also Mark 4.10–12; Luke 8.9–10)

10Then the disciples came to Jesus and asked him, "Why do you use parables when you talk to them?"

11Jesus answered, "The knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. 12For the man who has something will be given more, so that he will have more than enough; but the man who has nothing will have taken away from him even the little he has. 13The reason that I use parables to talk to them is this: they look, but do not see, and they listen, but do not hear or understand. 14So the prophecy of Isaiah comes true in their case:

'You will listen and listen, but not understand;
you will look and look, but not see,
15because this people's minds are dull,
and they have stopped up their ears,
and have closed their eyes.
Otherwise, their eyes would see,
their ears would hear,
their minds would understand,
and they would turn to me, says God,
and I would heal them.'

16"As for you, how fortunate you are! Your eyes see and your ears hear. 17Remember this! Many prophets and many of God's people wanted very much to see what you see, but they could not, and to hear what you hear, but they did not."

Jesus Explains the Parable of the Sower

(Also Mark 4.13–20; Luke 8.11–15)

18 "Listen, then, and learn what the parable of the
sower means. 19 Those who hear the message about the
Kingdom but do not understand it are like the seed that
fell along the path. The Evil One comes and snatches
away what was sown in them. 20 The seed that fell on
rocky ground stands for those who receive the message
gladly as soon as they hear it. 21 But it does not sink deep
in them, and they don't last long. So when trouble or
persecution comes because of the message, they give up
at once. 22 The seed that fell among thorns stands for
those who hear the message, but the worries about this
life and the love for riches choke the message, and they
don't bear fruit. 23 And the seed sown in the good soil
stands for those who hear the message and understand
it: they bear fruit, some as much as one hundred, others
sixty, and others thirty."

The Parable of the Weeds

24 Jesus told them another parable, "The Kingdom of
heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field.
25 One night, when everyone was asleep, an enemy came
and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away.
26 When the plants grew and the heads of grain began to
form, then the weeds showed up. 27 The man's servants
came to him and said, 'Sir, it was good seed you sowed
in your field; where did the weeds come from?' 28 'It was
some enemy who did this,' he answered. 'Do you want
us to go and pull up the weeds?' they asked him. 29 'No,'
he answered, 'because as you gather the weeds you
might pull up some of the wheat along with them. 30 Let
the wheat and the weeds both grow together until har-
vest, and then I will tell the harvest workers: Pull up the
weeds first and tie them in bundles to throw in the fire;
then gather in the wheat and put it in my barn.' "

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

(Also Mark 4.30–32; Luke 13.18–19)

31 Jesus told them another parable, "The Kingdom of
heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man takes and
sows in his field. 32 It is the smallest of all seeds, but when

it grows up it is the biggest of all plants. It becomes a tree, so that the birds come and make their nests in its branches."

The Parable of the Yeast

(Also Luke 13.20–21)

33 Jesus told them another parable, "The Kingdom of heaven is like yeast. A woman takes it and mixes it with a bushel of flour, until the whole batch of dough rises."

Jesus' Use of Parables

(Also Mark 4.33–34)

34 Jesus used parables to tell all these things to the crowds; he would not say a thing to them without using a parable. 35 He did this to make come true what the prophet had said,

"I will use parables when I speak to them;
I will tell them things unknown since
the creation of the world."

Jesus Explains the Parable of the Weeds

36 Then Jesus left the crowd and went indoors. His disciples came to him and said, "Tell us what the parable of the weeds in the field means."

37 Jesus answered, "The man who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man; 38 the field is the world; the good seed is the people who belong to the Kingdom; the weeds are the people who belong to the Evil One; 39 and the enemy who sowed the weeds is the Devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvest workers are angels. 40 Just as the weeds are gathered up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age: 41 the Son of Man will send out his angels and they will gather up out of his Kingdom all who cause people to sin, and all other evildoers, 42 and throw them into the fiery furnace, where they will cry and gnash their teeth. 43 Then God's people will shine like the sun in their Father's Kingdom. Listen, then, if you have ears!"

The Parable of the Hidden Treasure

44 "The Kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field. A man happens to find it, so he covers it up

again. He is so happy that he goes and sells everything he has, and then goes back and buys the field."

The Parable of the Pearl

45"Also, the Kingdom of heaven is like a buyer looking for fine pearls. 46When he finds one that is unusually fine, he goes and sells everything he has, and buys the pearl."

The Parable of the Net

47"Also, the Kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown out in the lake, which catches all kinds of fish. 48When it is full, the fishermen pull it to shore and sit down to divide the fish: the good ones go into their buckets, the worthless ones are thrown away. 49It will be like this at the end of the age: the angels will go out and gather up the evil people from among the good, 50and throw them into the fiery furnace. There they will cry and gnash their teeth."

New and Old Truths

51"Do you understand these things?" Jesus asked them.

"Yes," they answered.

52So he replied, "This means, then, that every teacher of the Law who becomes a disciple in the Kingdom of heaven is like a homeowner who takes new and old things out of his storage room."

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

(Also Mark 6.1–6; Luke 4.16–30)

53When Jesus finished telling these parables, he left that place 54and went back to his home town. He taught in their synagogue, and those who heard him were amazed. "Where did he get such wisdom?" they asked. "And what about his miracles? 55Isn't he the carpenter's son? Isn't Mary his mother, and aren't James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas his brothers? 56Aren't all his sisters living here? Where did he get all this?" 57And so they rejected him.

Jesus said to them, "A prophet is respected everywhere except in his home town and by his own family."

[58]He did not perform many miracles there because they did not have faith.

The Death of John the Baptist

(Also Mark 6.14–29; Luke 9.7–9)

14 It was at that time that Herod, the ruler of Galilee, heard about Jesus. [2]"He is really John the Baptist, who has come back to life," he told his officials. "That is why these powers are at work in him."

[3]For Herod had ordered John's arrest, and had him tied up and put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. [4]John the Baptist kept telling Herod, "It isn't right for you to marry her!" [5]Herod wanted to kill him, but he was afraid of the Jewish people, because they considered John to be a prophet.

[6]On Herod's birthday the daughter of Herodias danced in front of the whole group. Herod was so pleased [7]that he promised her, "I swear that I will give you anything you ask for!"

[8]At her mother's suggestion she asked him, "Give me right here the head of John the Baptist on a plate!"

[9]The king was sad, but because of the promise he had made in front of all his guests he gave orders that her wish be granted. [10]So he had John beheaded in prison. [11]The head was brought in on a plate and given to the girl, who took it to her mother. [12]John's disciples came, got his body, and buried it; then they went and told Jesus.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

(Also Mark 6.30–44; Luke 9.10–17; John 6.1–14)

[13]When Jesus heard the news, he left that place in a boat and went to a lonely place by himself. The people heard about it, left their towns, and followed him by land. [14]Jesus got out of the boat, and when he saw the large crowd his heart was filled with pity for them, and he healed their sick.

[15]That evening his disciples came to him and said, "It is already very late, and this is a lonely place. Send the people away and let them go to the villages and buy food for themselves."

All we have here are five loaves and two fish

16"They don't have to leave," answered Jesus. "You
yourselves give them something to eat."
17"All we have here are five loaves and two fish,"
they replied.
18"Bring them here to me," Jesus said. 19He ordered
the people to sit down on the grass; then he took the
five loaves and the two fish, looked up to heaven, and
gave thanks to God. He broke the loaves and gave
them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to
the people. 20Everyone ate and had enough. Then the
disciples took up twelve baskets full of what was left
over. 21The number of men who ate was about five
thousand, not counting the women and children.

Jesus Walks on the Water

(Also Mark 6.45–52; John 6.15–21)

22Then Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and
go ahead of him to the other side of the lake, while he
sent the people away. 23After sending the people away,
he went up a hill by himself to pray. When evening
came, Jesus was there alone; 24by this time the boat was
far out in the lake, tossed about by the waves, because

the wind was blowing against it. [25]Between three and six o'clock in the morning Jesus came to them, walking on the water. [26]When the disciples saw him walking on the water they were terrified. "It's a ghost!" they said, and screamed with fear.

[27]Jesus spoke to them at once. "Courage!" he said. "It is I. Don't be afraid!"

[28]Then Peter spoke up. "Lord," he said, "if it is really you, order me to come out on the water to you."

[29]"Come!" answered Jesus. So Peter got out of the boat and started walking on the water to Jesus. [30]When he noticed the wind, however, he was afraid, and started to sink down in the water. "Save me, Lord!" he cried.

[31]At once Jesus reached out and grabbed him and said, "How little faith you have! Why did you doubt?"

[32]They both got into the boat, and the wind died down. [33]The disciples in the boat worshiped Jesus. "Truly you are the Son of God!" they exclaimed.

Jesus Heals the Sick in Gennesaret

(Also Mark 6.53–56)

[34]They crossed the lake and came to land at Gennesaret, [35]where the people recognized Jesus. So they sent for the sick people in all the surrounding country and brought them to Jesus. [36]They begged him to let the sick at least touch the edge of his cloak; and all who touched it were made well.

The Teaching of the Ancestors

(Also Mark 7.1–13)

15 Then some Pharisees and teachers of the Law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked him, [2]"Why is it that your disciples disobey the teaching handed down by our ancestors? They don't wash their hands in the proper way before they eat!"

[3]Jesus answered, "And why do you disobey God's command and follow your own teaching? [4]For God said, 'Honor your father and mother,' and 'Anyone who says bad things about his father or mother must be put to death.' [5]But you teach that if a person has something he could use to help his father or mother, but says, 'This belongs to God,' [6]he does not need to honor his father.

This is how you disregard God's word to follow your
own teaching. 7You hypocrites! How right Isaiah was
when he prophesied about you!

8 "These people, says God, honor me with
their words,
but their heart is really far away from
me.
9 It is no use for them to worship me,
because they teach man-made com-
mandments as though they were
God's rules!' "

The Things That Make a Person Unclean

(Also Mark 7.14–23)

10Then Jesus called the crowd to him and said to
them, "Listen, and understand! 11It is not what goes into
a person's mouth that makes him unclean; rather, what
comes out of it makes him unclean."

12Then the disciples came to him and said, "Do you
know that the Pharisees had their feelings hurt by what
you said?"

13"Every plant which my Father in heaven did not
plant will be pulled up," answered Jesus. 14"Don't worry

When one blind man leads another one, both fall

about them! They are blind leaders; and when one blind man leads another one, both fall into a ditch."

15 Peter spoke up, "Tell us what this parable means."

16 Jesus said to them, "You are still no more intelligent than the others. 17 Don't you understand? Anything that goes into a person's mouth goes into his stomach and then on out of the body. 18 But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart; such things make a man unclean. 19 For from his heart come the evil ideas which lead him to kill, commit adultery, and do other immoral things; to rob, lie, and slander others. 20 These are the things that make a man unclean. But to eat without washing your hands as they say you should—this does not make a man unclean."

A Woman's Faith

(Also Mark 7.24–30)

21 Jesus left that place and went off to the territory near the cities of Tyre and Sidon. 22 A Canaanite woman who lived in that region came to him. "Son of David, sir!" she cried. "Have mercy on me! My daughter has a demon and is in a terrible condition."

23 But Jesus did not say a word to her. His disciples came to him and begged him, "Send her away! She is following us and making all this noise!"

24 Then Jesus replied, "I have been sent only to the lost sheep of the people of Israel."

25 At this the woman came and fell at his feet. "Help me, sir!" she said.

26 Jesus answered, "It isn't right to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs."

27 "That is true, sir," she answered; "but even the dogs eat the leftovers that fall from their masters' table."

28 So Jesus answered her, "You are a woman of great faith! What you want will be done for you." And at that very moment her daughter was healed.

Jesus Heals Many People

29 Jesus left that place and went along by Lake Galilee. He climbed a hill and sat down. 30 Large crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the blind, the crippled, the dumb, and many other sick people, whom they placed at Jesus' feet; and he healed them. 31 The people

The lame, the blind, the crippled, the dumb

were amazed as they saw the dumb speaking, the crippled whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they praised the God of Israel.

Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand

(Also Mark 8.1–10)

32 Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I feel
sorry for these people, because they have been with me
for three days and now have nothing to eat. I don't want
to send them away without feeding them, because they
might faint on their way home."
33 The disciples asked him, "Where will we find
enough food in this desert to feed this crowd?"
34 "How much bread do you have?" Jesus asked.
"Seven loaves," they answered, "and a few small fish."
35 So Jesus ordered the crowd to sit down on the
ground. 36 Then he took the seven loaves and the fish,
gave thanks to God, broke them and gave them to the
disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people.
37 They all ate and had enough. The disciples took up
seven baskets full of pieces left over. 38 The number of
men who ate was four thousand, not counting the
women and children.
39 Then Jesus sent the people away, got into the boat,
and went to the territory of Magadan.

The Demand for a Miracle

(Also Mark 8.11–13; Luke 12.54–56)

16 Some Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus. They wanted to trap him, so they asked him to perform a miracle for them, to show God's approval.
[2]But Jesus answered, "When the sun is setting you say, 'We are going to have fine weather, because the sky is red.' [3]And early in the morning you say, 'It is going to rain, because the sky is red and dark.' You can predict the weather by looking at the sky; but you cannot interpret the signs concerning these times! [4]How evil and godless are the people of this day! You ask me for a miracle? No! The only miracle you will be given is the miracle of Jonah."

So he left them and went away.

The Yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees

(Also Mark 8.14–21)

[5]When the disciples crossed over to the other side of the lake, they forgot to take any bread. [6]Jesus said to them, "Look out, and be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

[7]They started discussing among themselves, "He says this because we didn't bring any bread."

[8]Jesus knew what they were saying, so he asked them, "Why are you discussing among yourselves about not having any bread? How little faith you have! [9]Don't you understand yet? Don't you remember when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand men? How many baskets did you fill? [10]And what about the seven loaves for the four thousand men? How many baskets did you fill? [11]How is it that you don't understand that I was not talking to you about bread? Guard yourselves from the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!"

[12]Then the disciples understood that he was not telling them to guard themselves from the yeast used in bread, but from the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Peter's Declaration about Jesus

(Also Mark 8.27–30; Luke 9.18–21)

[13]Jesus went to the territory near the town of Cae-

sarea Philippi, where he asked his disciples, "Who do men say the Son of Man is?"

[14]"Some say John the Baptist," they answered. "Others say Elijah, while others say Jeremiah or some other prophet."

[15]"What about you?" he asked them. "Who do you say I am?"

[16]Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

[17]"Good for you, Simon, son of John!" answered Jesus. "Because this truth did not come to you from any human being, but it was given to you directly by my Father in heaven. [18]And so I tell you: you are a rock, Peter, and on this rock foundation I will build my church, which not even death will ever be able to overcome. [19]I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven; what you prohibit on earth will be prohibited in heaven; what you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven."

[20]Then Jesus ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Jesus Speaks about His Suffering and Death

(Also Mark 8.31—9.1; Luke 9.22–27)

[21]From that time on Jesus began to say plainly to his disciples, "I must go to Jerusalem and suffer much from the elders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law. I will be put to death, and on the third day I will be raised to life."

[22]Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "God forbid it, Lord!" he said. "This must never happen to you!"

[23]Jesus turned around and said to Peter, "Get away from me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my way, because these thoughts of yours are men's thoughts, not God's!"

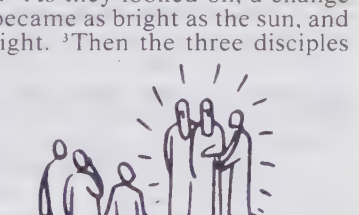
[24]Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone wants to come with me, he must forget himself, carry his cross, and follow me. [25]For whoever wants to save his own life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. [26]Will a man gain anything if he wins the whole world but loses his life? Of course not! There is nothing a man can give to regain his life. [27]For the Son of Man is about to come in the glory of his Father with his

angels, and then he will repay everyone according to his deeds. [28]Remember this! There are some here who will not die until they have seen the Son of Man come as King."

The Transfiguration

(Also Mark 9.2–13; Luke 9.28–36)

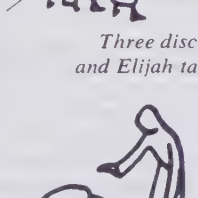
17 Six days later Jesus took with him Peter and the brothers James and John, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. [2]As they looked on, a change came over him: his face became as bright as the sun, and his clothes as white as light. [3]Then the three disciples saw Moses and Elijah talking with Jesus. [4]So Peter spoke up and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is a good thing that we are here; if you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."



Three disciples saw Moses and Elijah talking with Jesus

[5]While he was talking, a shining cloud came over them and a voice said from the cloud: "This is my own dear Son, with whom I am well pleased—listen to him!"

[6]When the disciples heard the voice they were so terrified that they threw themselves face down to the ground. [7]Jesus came to them and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid!" [8]So they looked up and saw no one else except Jesus.



They threw themselves face down to the ground

[9]As they came down the mountain Jesus ordered them, "Don't tell anyone about this vision you have seen until the Son of Man has been raised from death."

[10]Then the disciples asked Jesus, "Why do the teachers of the Law say that Elijah has to come first?"

[11]"Elijah does indeed come first," answered Jesus, "and he will get everything ready. [12]But I tell you this: Elijah has already come and people did not recognize him, but treated him just as they pleased. In the same way the Son of Man will also be mistreated by them."

[13]Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.

Jesus Heals a Boy with a Demon

(Also Mark 9.14–29; Luke 9.37–43a)

[14]When they returned to the crowd, a man came to Jesus, knelt before him, [15]and said, "Sir, have mercy on my son! He is epileptic and has such terrible fits that he often falls in the fire or in the water. [16]I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him."

[17]Jesus answered, "How unbelieving and wrong you people are! How long must I stay with you? How long do I have to put up with you? Bring the boy here to me!" [18]Jesus commanded the demon and it went out, so that the boy was healed at that very moment.

[19]Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked him, "Why couldn't we drive the demon out?"

[20]"It was because you do not have enough faith," answered Jesus. "Remember this! If you have faith as big as a mustard seed, you can say to this hill, 'Go from here to there!' and it will go. You could do anything! [[21]But only prayer and fasting can drive this kind out; nothing else can.]"

Jesus Speaks Again about His Death

(Also Mark 9.30–32; Luke 9.43b–45)

[22]When the disciples all came together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be handed over to men [23]who will kill him; but on the third day he will be raised to life."

The disciples became very sad.

Payment of the Temple Tax

[24]When Jesus and his disciples came to Capernaum, the collectors of the temple tax came to Peter and asked, "Does your teacher pay the temple tax?"

[25]"Of course," Peter answered.

When Peter went into the house, Jesus spoke up first, "Simon, what is your opinion? Who pays duties or taxes to the kings of this world? The citizens of the country or the foreigners?"

[26]"The foreigners," answered Peter.

"Well, then," replied Jesus, "that means that the citizens don't have to pay. [27]But we don't want to offend these people. So go to the lake and drop in a line; pull up the first fish you hook, and in its mouth you will find a coin worth enough for my temple tax and yours; take it and pay them our taxes."

Who Is the Greatest?

(Also Mark 9.33–37; Luke 9.46–48)

18 At that moment the disciples came to Jesus, asking, "Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?"

[2]Jesus called a child, had him stand in front of them, [3]and said, "Remember this! Unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the Kingdom of heaven. [4]The greatest in the Kingdom of heaven is the one who humbles himself and becomes like this child. [5]And whoever welcomes in my name one such child as this, welcomes me."

Temptations to Sin

(Also Mark 9.42–48; Luke 17.1–2)

[6]"If anyone should cause one of these little ones to turn away from his faith in me, it would be better for that man to have a large millstone tied around his neck and be drowned in the deep sea. [7]How terrible for the world that there are things that make people turn away! Such things will always happen—but how terrible for the one who causes them!

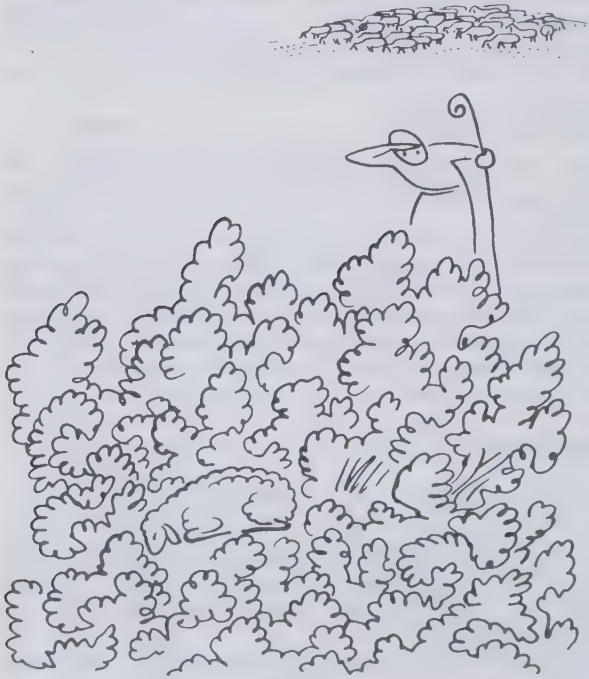
[8]"If your hand or your foot makes you turn away, cut it off and throw it away! It is better for you to enter life without a hand or a foot than to keep both hands and

both feet and be thrown into the eternal fire. 9And if your eye makes you turn away, take it out and throw it away! It is better for you to enter life with only one eye than to keep both eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell."

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

(Also Luke 15.3–7)

10"See that you don't despise any of these little ones. Their angels in heaven, I tell you, are always in the presence of my Father in heaven. [11For the Son of Man came to save the lost.]



Look for the lost sheep

12"What do you think? What will a man do who has
one hundred sheep and one of them gets lost? He will
leave the other ninety-nine grazing on the hillside and
go to look for the lost sheep. 13When he finds it, I tell
you, he feels far happier over this one sheep than over
the ninety-nine that did not get lost. 14In just the same
way your Father in heaven does not want any of these
little ones to be lost."

A Brother Who Sins

15"If your brother sins against you, go to him and
show him his fault. But do it privately, just between
yourselves. If he listens to you, you have won your
brother back. 16But if he will not listen to you, take one
or two other persons with you, so that 'every accusation
may be upheld by the testimony of two or three wit-
nesses,' as the scripture says. 17But if he will not listen
to them, then tell the whole thing to the church. And
then, if he will not listen to the church, treat him as
though he were a foreigner or a tax collector."

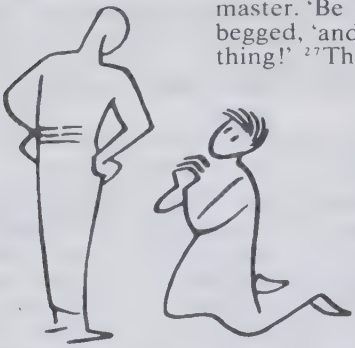
Prohibiting and Permitting

18"And so I tell all of you: what you prohibit on earth
will be prohibited in heaven; what you permit on earth
will be permitted in heaven.
19"And I tell you more: whenever two of you on earth
agree about anything you pray for, it will be done for
you by my Father in heaven. 20For where two or three
come together in my name, I am there with them."

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

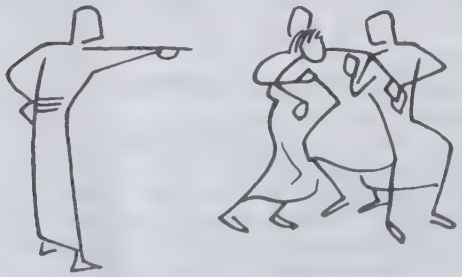
21Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how
many times can my brother sin against me and I have
to forgive him? Seven times?"
22"No, not seven times," answered Jesus, "but sev-
enty times seven. 23Because the Kingdom of heaven is
like a king who decided to check on his servants' ac-
counts. 24He had just begun to do so when one of them
was brought in who owed him millions of dollars.
25The servant did not have enough to pay his debt, so

his master ordered him to be sold as a slave, with his wife and his children and all that he had, in order to pay the debt. [26]The servant fell on his knees before his master. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay you everything!' [27]The master felt sorry for him, so he forgave him the debt and let him go.



Be patient with me

[28]"The man went out and met one of his fellow servants who owed him a few dollars. He grabbed him and started choking him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he said. [29]His fellow servant fell down and begged him, 'Be patient with me and I will pay you back!' [30]But he would not; instead, he had him thrown into jail until he should pay the debt. [31]When the other servants saw what had happened, they were very upset, and went to their master and told him everything. [32]So the master called the servant in. 'You worthless slave!' he said. 'I forgave you the whole amount you owed me, just because you asked me to. [33]You should have had mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy



You worthless slave!

on you.' [34]The master was very angry, and he sent the servant to jail to be punished until he should pay back the whole amount."

[35]And Jesus concluded, "That is how my Father in heaven will treat you if you do not forgive your brother, every one of you, from your heart."

Jesus Teaches about Divorce

(Also Mark 10.1–12)

19 When Jesus finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went to the territory of Judea, on the other side of the Jordan River. [2]Large crowds followed him, and he healed them there.

[3]Some Pharisees came to him and tried to trap him by asking, "Does our Law allow a man to divorce his wife for any reason he wishes?"

[4]Jesus answered, "Haven't you read this scripture? 'In the beginning the Creator made them male and female, [5]and said, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife, and the two will become one." ' [6]So they are no longer two, but one. Man must not separate, then, what God has joined together."

[7]The Pharisees asked him, "Why, then, did Moses give the commandment for a man to give his wife a divorce notice and send her away?"

[8]Jesus answered, "Moses gave you permission to divorce your wives because you are so hard to teach. But it was not this way at the time of creation. [9]I tell you, then, that any man who divorces his wife, and she has not been unfaithful, commits adultery if he marries some other woman."

[10]His disciples said to him, "If this is the way it is between a man and his wife, it is better not to marry."

[11]Jesus answered, "This teaching does not apply to everyone, but only to those to whom God has given it. [12]For there are different reasons why men cannot marry: some, because they were born that way; others, because men made them that way; and others do not marry because of the Kingdom of heaven. Let him who can do it accept this teaching."

Jesus Blesses Little Children

(Also Mark 10.13–16; Luke 18.15–17)

13 Some people brought children to Jesus for him to
place his hands on them and pray, but the disciples
scolded those people. 14 Jesus said, "Let the children
come to me, and do not stop them, because the King-
dom of heaven belongs to such as these."
15 He placed his hands on them and left.

Let the children come to me

The Rich Young Man

(Also Mark 10.17–31; Luke 18.18–30)

16 Once a man came to Jesus. "Teacher," he asked,
"what good thing must I do to receive eternal life?"
17 "Why do you ask me concerning what is good?"
answered Jesus. "There is only One who is good. Keep
the commandments if you want to enter life."
18 "What commandments?" he asked.
Jesus answered, "Do not murder; do not commit
adultery; do not steal; do not lie; 19 honor your father and
mother; and love your fellow-man as yourself."
20 "I have obeyed all these commandments," the
young man replied. "What else do I need?"
21 Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go and
sell all you have and give the money to the poor, and you

will have riches in heaven; then come and follow me."
22When the young man heard this he went away sad,
because he was very rich.
23Jesus then said to his disciples, "It will be very
hard, I tell you, for a rich man to enter the Kingdom
of heaven. 24I tell you something else: it is much
harder for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God
than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle."
25When the disciples heard this they were com-
pletely amazed. "Who can be saved, then?" they
asked.
26Jesus looked straight at them and answered, "This
is impossible for men; but for God everything is possi-
ble."
27Then Peter spoke up. "Look," he said, "we have
left everything and followed you. What will we have?"
28Jesus said to them, "I tell you this: when the Son
of Man sits on his glorious throne in the New Age,
then you twelve followers of mine will also sit on
thrones, to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. 29And
every one who has left houses or brothers or sisters or
father or mother or children or fields for my sake, will
receive a hundred times more, and will be given eter-
nal life. 30But many who now are first will be last, and
many who now are last will be first."

The Workers in the Vineyard

20 "The Kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a
vineyard who went out early in the morning to
hire some men to work in his vineyard. 2He agreed to
pay them the regular wage, a silver coin a day, and sent
them to work in his vineyard. 3He went out again to the
market place at nine o'clock and saw some men standing
there doing nothing, 4so he told them, 'You also go to
work in the vineyard, and I will pay you a fair wage.' 5So
they went. Then at twelve o'clock and again at three
o'clock he did the same thing. 6It was nearly five o'clock
when he went to the market place and saw some other
men still standing there. 'Why are you wasting the
whole day here doing nothing?' he asked them. 7'It is
because no one hired us,' they answered. 'Well, then,
you also go to work in the vineyard,' he told them.
8"When evening came, the owner told his foreman,

'Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with those who were hired last, and ending with those who were hired first.' [9]The men who had begun to work at five o'clock were paid a silver coin each. [10]So when the men who were the first to be hired came to be paid, they thought they would get more; but they too were given a silver coin each. [11]They took their money and started grumbling against the employer. [12]'These men who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'while we put up with a whole day's work in the hot sun —yet you paid them the same as you paid us!' [13]'Listen, friend,' the owner answered one of them. 'I have not cheated you. After all, you agreed to do a day's work for a silver coin. [14]Now, take your pay and go home. I want to give this man who was hired last as much as I have given you. [15]Don't I have the right to do as I wish with my own money? Or are you jealous because I am generous?' "

[16]And Jesus concluded, "So those who are last will be first, and those who are first will be last."

Jesus Speaks a Third Time about His Death

(Also Mark 10.32–34; Luke 18.31–34)

[17]As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem he took the twelve disciples aside and spoke to them privately, as they walked along. [18]"Listen," he told them, "we are going up to Jerusalem, where the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the teachers of the Law. They will condemn him to death [19]and then hand him over to the Gentiles, who will make fun of him, whip him, and nail him to the cross; and on the third day he will be raised to life."

A Mother's Request

(Also Mark 10.35–45)

[20]Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons, bowed before him, and asked him for a favor.

[21]"What do you want?" Jesus asked her.

She answered, "Promise that these two sons of mine will sit at your right and your left when you are King."

[22]"You don't know what you are asking for," Jesus

answered them. "Can you drink the cup that I am about to drink?"

"We can," they answered.

23"You will indeed drink from my cup," Jesus told them, "but I do not have the right to choose who will sit at my right and my left. These places belong to those for whom my Father has prepared them."

24When the other ten disciples heard about this they became angry with the two brothers. 25So Jesus called them all together to him and said, "You know that the rulers have power over the people, and their leaders rule over them. 26This, however, is not the way it shall be among you. If one of you wants to be great, he must be the servant of the rest; 27and if one of you wants to be first, he must be your slave—28like the Son of Man, who did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life to redeem many people."

Jesus Heals Two Blind Men

(Also Mark 10.46–52; Luke 18.35–43)

29As they were leaving Jericho a large crowd followed Jesus. 30Two blind men who were sitting by the road heard that Jesus was passing by, so they began to shout, "Son of David! Have mercy on us, sir!"

31The crowd scolded them and told them to be quiet. But they shouted even more loudly, "Son of David! Have mercy on us, sir!"

32Jesus stopped and called them. "What do you want me to do for you?" he asked them.

33"Sir," they answered, "we want you to open our eyes!"

34Jesus had pity on them and touched their eyes; at once they were able to see, and followed him.

The Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem

(Also Mark 11.1–11; Luke 19.28–40; John 12.12–19)

21 As they approached Jerusalem, they came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives. There Jesus sent two of the disciples on ahead 2with these instructions, "Go to the village there ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied up and her colt with her.

Untie them and bring them to me. [3]And if anyone says
anything, tell him, 'The Master needs them'; and he will
let them go at once."

[4]This happened to make come true what the prophet
had said:

[5] "Tell the city of Zion,
Now your king is coming to you.
He is gentle and rides on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

[6]So the disciples went ahead and did what Jesus had
told them to do: [7]they brought the donkey and the
colt, threw their cloaks over them, and Jesus got on.

Praise to David's Son!

[8]A great crowd of people spread their cloaks on the
road, while others cut branches from the trees and
spread them on the road. [9]The crowds walking in front
of Jesus and the crowds walking behind began to
shout, "Praise to David's Son! God bless him who
comes in the name of the Lord! Praise be to God!"

10When Jesus entered Jerusalem the whole city was
thrown in an uproar. "Who is he?" the people asked.
11"This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Gali-
lee," the crowds answered.

Jesus Goes to the Temple

(Also Mark 11.15–19; Luke 19.45–48; John 2.13–22)

12Jesus went into the temple and drove out all those
who bought and sold in the temple; he overturned the
tables of the moneychangers and the stools of those who
sold pigeons, 13and said to them, "It is written in the
Scriptures that God said, 'My house will be called a
house of prayer.' But you are making it a hideout for
thieves!"
14The blind and the crippled came to him in the tem-
ple and he healed them. 15The chief priests and the
teachers of the Law became angry when they saw the
wonderful things he was doing, and the children shout-
ing and crying in the temple, "Praise to David's Son!"
16So they said to Jesus, "Do you hear what they are
saying?"
"Indeed I do," answered Jesus. "Haven't you ever
read this scripture? 'You have trained children and ba-
bies to offer perfect praise.' "
17Jesus left them and went out of the city to Bethany,
where he spent the night.

Jesus Curses the Fig Tree

(Also Mark 11.12–14, 20–24)

18On his way back to the city, early next morning,
Jesus was hungry. 19He saw a fig tree by the side of the
road and went to it, but found nothing on it except
leaves. So he said to the tree, "You will never again bear
fruit!" At once the fig tree dried up.
20The disciples saw this and were astounded. "How
did the fig tree dry up so quickly?" they asked.
21"Remember this!" Jesus answered. "If you believe,
and do not doubt, you will be able to do what I have
done to this fig tree; not only this, you will even be able
to say to this hill, 'Get up and throw yourself in the sea,'
and it will. 22If you believe, you will receive whatever
you ask for in prayer."

The Question about Jesus' Authority

(Also Mark 11.27–33; Luke 20.1–8)

[23]Jesus came back to the temple; and as he taught, the chief priests and the Jewish elders came to him and asked, "What right do you have to do these things? Who gave you this right?"

[24]Jesus answered them, "I will ask you just one question, and if you give me an answer I will tell you what right I have to do these things. [25]Where did John's right to baptize come from: from God or from men?"

They started to argue among themselves, "What shall we say? If we answer, 'From God,' he will say to us, 'Why, then, did you not believe John?' [26]But if we say, 'From men,' we are afraid of what the people might do, because they are all convinced that John was a prophet." [27]So they answered Jesus, "We don't know."

And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you, then, by what right I do these things."

The Parable of the Two Sons

[28]"Now, what do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the older one and said, 'Son, go work in the vineyard today.' [29]'I don't want to,' he answered, but later he changed his mind and went to the vineyard. [30]Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. 'Yes, sir,' he answered, but he did not go. [31]Which one of the two did what his father wanted?"

"The older one," they answered.

"And I tell you this," Jesus said to them. "The tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the Kingdom of God ahead of you. [32]For John the Baptist came to you showing you the right path to take, and you would not believe him; but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. Even when you saw this you did not change your minds later on and believe him."

The Parable of the Tenants in the Vineyard

(Also Mark 12.1–12; Luke 20.9–19)

[33]"Listen to another parable," Jesus said. "There was

a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a hole for the winepress, and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to tenants and left home on a trip. [34]When the time came to harvest the grapes he sent his slaves to the tenants to receive his share. [35]The tenants grabbed his slaves, beat one, killed another, and stoned another. [36]Again the man sent other slaves, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. [37]Last of all he sent them his son. 'Surely they will respect my son,' he said. [38]But when the tenants saw the son they said to themselves, 'This is the owner's son. Come on, let us kill him, and we will get his property!' [39]So they grabbed him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.

[40]"Now, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" Jesus asked.

[41]"He will certainly kill those evil men," they answered, "and rent the vineyard out to other tenants, who will give him his share of the harvest at the right time."

[42]Jesus said to them, "Haven't you ever read what the Scriptures say?

'The very stone which the builders rejected
turned out to be the most important stone.
This was done by the Lord;
how wonderful it is!'

[43]"And so I tell you," added Jesus, "the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and be given to a people who will produce the proper fruits. [[44]Whoever falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and if the stone falls on someone it will crush him to dust.]"

[45]The chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus' parables and knew that he was talking about them, [46]so they tried to arrest him. But they were afraid of the crowds, who considered Jesus to be a prophet.

The Parable of the Wedding Feast

(Also Luke 14.15–24)

22 Jesus again used parables in talking to the people. [2]"The Kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding feast for his son. [3]He sent his serv-

ants to tell the invited guests to come to the feast, but they did not want to come. 4So he sent other servants with the message: 'Tell the guests, "My feast is ready now; my steers and prize calves have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast!" ' 5But the invited guests paid no attention and went about their business: one went to his farm, the other to his store, 6while others grabbed the servants, beat them, and killed them. 7The king was very angry; he sent his soldiers, who killed those murderers and burned down their city. 8Then he called his servants. 'My wedding feast is ready,' he said, 'but the people I invited did not deserve it. 9Now go to the main streets and invite to the feast as many people as you find.' 10So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, good and bad alike; and the wedding hall was filled with people.

11"The king went in to look at the guests and he saw a man who was not wearing wedding clothes. 12'Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' the king asked him. But the man said nothing. 13Then the king told the servants, 'Tie him up hand and foot and throw him outside in the dark. There he will cry and gnash his teeth.' "

14And Jesus concluded, "For many are invited, but few are chosen."

The Question about Paying Taxes

(Also Mark 12.13–17; Luke 20.20–26)

15The Pharisees went off and made a plan to trap Jesus with questions. 16Then they sent some of their disciples and some members of Herod's party to Jesus. "Teacher," they said, "we know that you tell the truth. You teach the truth about God's will for man, without worrying about what people think, because you pay no attention to a man's status. 17Tell us, then, what do you think? Is it against our Law to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor, or not?"

18Jesus was aware of their evil plan, however, and so he said, "You hypocrites! Why are you trying to trap me? 19Show me the coin to pay the tax!"

They brought him the coin, 20and he asked them,

"Whose face and name are these?"

21"The Emperor's," they answered.

So Jesus said to them, "Well, then, pay to the Emperor what belongs to him, and pay to God what belongs to God."

22When they heard this, they were filled with wonder; and they left him and went away.

The Question about Rising from Death

(Also Mark 12.18–27; Luke 20.27–40)

23That same day some Sadducees came to Jesus. (They are the ones who say that people will not rise from death.) 24"Teacher," they said, "Moses taught: 'If a man who has no children dies, his brother must marry the widow so they can have children for the dead man.' 25Now, there were seven brothers who used to live here. The oldest got married, and died without having children, so he left his widow to his brother. 26The same thing happened to the second brother, to the third, and finally to all seven. 27Last of all, the woman died. 28Now, on the day when the dead rise to life, whose wife will she be? All of them had married her."

29Jesus answered them, "How wrong you are! It is because you don't know the Scriptures or God's power. 30For when the dead rise to life they will be like the angels in heaven, and men and women will not marry. 31Now, as for the dead rising to life: haven't you ever read what God has told you? He said, 32'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' This means that he is the God of the living, not of the dead."

33When the crowds heard this they were amazed at his teaching.

The Great Commandment

(Also Mark 12.28–34; Luke 10.25–28)

34When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they came together, 35and one of them, a teacher of the Law, tried to trap him with a question. 36"Teacher," he asked, "which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

37Jesus answered, " 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all

your mind.' [38]This is the greatest and the most important commandment. [39]The second most important commandment is like it: 'You must love your fellow-man as yourself.' [40]The whole Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets depend on these two commandments."

The Question about the Messiah

(Also Mark 12.35–37; Luke 20.41–44)

[41]When the Pharisees gathered together, Jesus asked them, [42]"What do you think about the Messiah? Whose descendant is he?"

"He is David's descendant," they answered.

[43]"Why, then," Jesus asked, "did the Spirit inspire David to call him 'Lord'? Because David said,

[44] 'The Lord said to my Lord:
Sit here at my right side,
until I put your enemies under your feet.'

[45]If, then, David called him 'Lord,' how can the Messiah be David's descendant?"

[46]No one was able to answer Jesus a single word, and from that day on no one dared ask him any more questions.

Jesus Warns against the Teachers of the Law and the Pharisees

(Also Mark 12.38–39; Luke 11.43, 46; 20.45–46)

23 Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples. [2]"The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees," he said, "are the authorized interpreters of Moses' Law. [3]So you must obey and follow everything they tell you to do; do not, however, imitate their actions, because they do not practice what they preach. [4]They fix up heavy loads and tie them on men's backs, yet they aren't willing even to lift a finger to help them carry those loads. [5]They do everything just so people will see them. See how big are the containers with scripture verses on their foreheads and arms, and notice how long are the hems of their cloaks! [6]They love the best places at feasts and the reserved seats in the synagogues; [7]they love to be greeted with respect in the market places and have people call them 'Teacher.' [8]You must not be called 'Teacher,' because you are all brothers of

one another and have only one Teacher. 9And you must not call anyone here on earth 'Father,' because you have only the one Father in heaven. 10Nor should you be called 'Leader,' because your one and only leader is the Messiah. 11The greatest one among you must be your servant. 12Whoever makes himself great will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be made great."

Jesus Condemns Their Hypocrisy

(Also Mark 12.40; Luke 11.39–42, 44, 52; 20.47)

13"How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! Hypocrites! You lock the door to the Kingdom of heaven in men's faces, but you yourselves will not go in, and neither will you let people in who are trying to go in!

[14"How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! Hypocrites! You take advantage of widows and rob them of their homes, and then make a show of saying long prayers! Because of this your punishment will be all the worse!]

15"How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! Hypocrites! You sail the seas and cross whole countries to win one convert; and when you succeed, you make him twice as deserving of going to hell as you yourselves are!

16"How terrible for you, blind guides! You teach, 'If a man swears by the temple he isn't bound by his vow; but if he swears by the gold in the temple, he is bound.' 17Blind fools! Which is more important, the gold or the temple which makes the gold holy? 18You also teach, 'If a man swears by the altar he isn't bound by his vow; but if he swears by the gift on the altar, he is bound.' 19How blind you are! Which is more important, the gift or the altar which makes the gift holy? 20So then, when a man swears by the altar he is swearing by it and by all the gifts on it; 21and when a man swears by the temple he is swearing by it and by God, the one who lives there; 22and when a man swears by heaven he is swearing by God's throne and by him who sits on it.

23"How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! Hypocrites! You give to God one tenth even of the seasoning herbs, such as mint, dill, and cummin, but you neglect to obey the really important teachings

of the Law, such as justice and mercy and honesty. These you should practice, without neglecting the others. [24]Blind guides! You strain a fly out of your drink, but swallow a camel!

[25]"How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! Hypocrites! You clean the outside of your cup and plate, while the inside is full of things you have gotten by violence and selfishness. [26]Blind Pharisee! Clean what is inside the cup first, and then the outside will be clean too!

[27]"How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! Hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look fine on the outside, but are full of dead men's bones and rotten stuff on the inside. [28]In the same way, on the outside you appear to everybody as good, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and sins."

Jesus Predicts Their Punishment

(Also Luke 11.47–51)

[29]"How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! Hypocrites! You make fine tombs for the prophets, and decorate the monuments of those who lived good lives, [30]and you say, 'If we had lived long ago in the time of our ancestors, we would not have done what they did and killed the prophets.' [31]So you actually admit that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets! [32]Go on, then, and finish up what your ancestors started! [33]Snakes, and sons of snakes! How do you expect to escape from being condemned to hell? [34]And so I tell you: I will send you prophets and wise men and teachers; you will kill some of them, nail others to the cross, and whip others in your synagogues and chase them from town to town. [35]As a result, the punishment for the murder of all innocent men will fall on you, from the murder of innocent Abel to the murder of Zechariah, Barachiah's son, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. [36]I tell you indeed: the punishment for all these will fall on the people of this day!"

Jesus' Love for Jerusalem

(Also Luke 13.34–35)

[37]"Jerusalem, Jerusalem! You kill the prophets and

stone the messengers God has sent you! How many times have I wanted to put my arms around all your people, just as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you would not let me! [38]Now your home will be completely forsaken. [39]From now on you will never see me again, I tell you, until you say, 'God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Jesus Speaks of the Destruction of the Temple

(Also Mark 13.1–2; Luke 21.5–6)

24 Jesus left and was going away from the temple when his disciples came to him to show him the temple's buildings. [2]"Yes," he said, "you may well look at all these. I tell you this: not a single stone here will be left in its place; every one of them will be thrown down."

Troubles and Persecutions

(Also Mark 13.3–13; Luke 21.7–19)

[3]As Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him in private. "Tell us when all this will be," they asked, "and what will happen to show that it is the time for your coming and the end of the age."

[4]Jesus answered, "Watch out, and do not let anyone fool you. [5]Because many men will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Messiah!' and fool many people. [6]You are going to hear the noise of battles close by and the news of battles far away; but, listen, do not be troubled. Such things must happen, but they do not mean that the end has come. [7]Countries will fight each other, kingdoms will attack one another. There will be famines and earthquakes everywhere. [8]All these things are like the first pains of childbirth.

[9]"Then you will be arrested and handed over to be punished, and be put to death. All mankind will hate you because of me. [10]Many will give up their faith at that time; they will betray each other and hate each other. [11]Then many false prophets will appear and fool many people. [12]Such will be the spread of evil that many people's love will grow cold. [13]But whoever holds out to the end will be saved. [14]And this Good News about the Kingdom will be preached through all the world, for a witness to all mankind; and then will come the end."

The Awful Horror

(Also Mark 13.14–23; Luke 21.20–24)

15"You will see 'The Awful Horror,' of which the
prophet Daniel spoke, standing in the holy place."
(Note to the reader: understand what this means!)
16"Then those who are in Judea must run away to the
hills. 17The man who is on the roof of his house must not
take the time to go down and get his belongings from the
house. 18The man who is in the field must not go back
to get his cloak. 19How terrible it will be in those days
for women who are pregnant, and for mothers who have
little babies! 20Pray to God that you will not have to run
away during the winter or on a Sabbath! 21For the trou-
ble at that time will be far more terrible than any there
has ever been, from the beginning of the world to this
very day. Nor will there ever be anything like it. 22But
God has already reduced the number of days; had he not
done so, nobody would survive. For the sake of his
chosen people, however, God will reduce the days.
23"Then, if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the
Messiah!' or 'There he is!'— do not believe him. 24For
false Messiahs and false prophets will appear; they will
perform great signs and wonders for the purpose of
deceiving God's chosen people, if possible. 25Listen! I
have told you this ahead of time.
26"Or, if people should tell you, 'Look, he is out in
the desert!'— don't go there; or if they say, 'Look, he
is hiding here!'— don't believe it. 27For the Son of
Man will come like the lightning which flashes across
the whole sky from the east to the west.
28"Wherever there is a dead body the vultures will
gather."

The Coming of the Son of Man

(Also Mark 13.24–27; Luke 21.25–28)

29"Soon after the trouble of those days the sun will
grow dark, the moon will no longer shine, the stars will
fall from heaven, and the powers in space will be driven
from their courses. 30Then the sign of the Son of Man
will appear in the sky; then all the tribes of earth will
weep, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the
clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31The

great trumpet will sound, and he will send out his angels to the four corners of the earth, and they will gather his chosen people from one end of the world to the other."

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

(Also Mark 13.28–31; Luke 21.29–33)

32"Let the fig tree teach you a lesson. When its branches become green and tender, and it starts putting out leaves, you know that summer is near. 33In the same way, when you see all these things, you will know that the time is near, ready to begin. 34Remember this! All these things will happen before the people now living have all died. 35Heaven and earth will pass away; my words will never pass away."

No One Knows the Day and Hour

(Also Mark 13.32–37; Luke 17.26–30, 34–36)

36"No one knows, however, when that day and hour will come—neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son; the Father alone knows. 37The coming of the Son of Man will be like what happened in the time of Noah. 38Just as in the days before the Flood, people ate and drank, men and women married, up to the very day Noah went into the ark; 39yet they did not know what was happening until the Flood came and swept them all away. That is how it will be when the Son of Man comes. 40At that time two men will be working in the field: one will be taken away, the other will be left behind. 41Two women will be at the mill grinding meal: one will be taken away, the other will be left behind. 42Watch out, then, because you do not know what day your Lord will come. 43Remember this: if the man of the house knew the time when the thief would come, he would stay awake and not let the thief break into his house. 44For this reason, then, you also must be always ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you are not expecting him."

The Faithful or the Unfaithful Servant

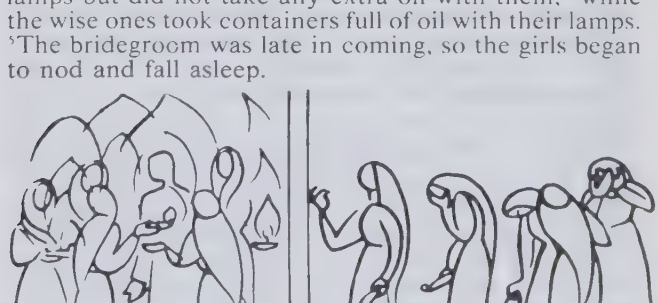
(Also Luke 12.41–48)

45"Who, then, is the faithful and wise servant? He is the one whom his master has placed in charge of the other servants, to give them their food at the proper

time. [46]How happy is that servant if his master finds him doing this when he comes home! [47]Indeed, I tell you, the master will put that servant in charge of all his property. [48]But if he is a bad servant, he will tell himself, 'My master will not come back for a long time,' [49]and he will begin to beat his fellow servants, and eat and drink with drunkards. [50]Then that servant's master will come back some day when he does not expect him and at a time he does not know. [51]The master will cut him to pieces, and make him share the fate of the hypocrites. There he will cry and gnash his teeth."

The Parable of the Ten Girls

25 "On that day the Kingdom of heaven will be like ten girls who took their oil lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. [2]Five of them were foolish, and the other five were wise. [3]The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any extra oil with them, [4]while the wise ones took containers full of oil with their lamps. [5]The bridegroom was late in coming, so the girls began to nod and fall asleep.



And the door was closed

[6]"It was already midnight when the cry rang out, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come and meet him!' [7]The ten girls woke up and trimmed their lamps. [8]Then the foolish ones said to the wise ones, 'Let us have some of your oil, because our lamps are going out.' [9]"No, indeed,' the

wise ones answered back, 'there is not enough for you and us. Go to the store and buy some for yourselves.' [10]So the foolish girls went off to buy some oil, and while they were gone the bridegroom arrived. The five girls who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was closed.

[11]"Later the other girls arrived. 'Sir, sir! Let us in!' they cried. [12]'But I really don't know you,' the bridegroom answered."

[13]And Jesus concluded, "Watch out, then, because you do not know the day or hour."

The Parable of the Three Servants

(Also Luke 19.11–27)

[14]"It will be like a man who was about to leave home on a trip; he called his servants and put them in charge of his property. [15]He gave to each one according to his ability: to one he gave five thousand dollars, to the other two thousand dollars, and to the other one thousand dollars. Then he left on his trip. [16]The servant who had received five thousand dollars went at once and invested his money and earned another five thousand dollars. [17]In the same way the servant who received two thousand dollars earned another two thousand dollars. [18]But the servant who received one thousand dollars went off, dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master's money.

[19]"After a long time the master of those servants came back and settled accounts with them. [20]The servant who had received five thousand dollars came in and handed over the other five thousand dollars. 'You gave me five thousand dollars, sir,' he said. 'Look! Here are another five thousand dollars that I have earned.' [21]'Well done, good and faithful servant!' said his master. 'You have been faithful in managing small amounts, so I will put you in charge of large amounts. Come on in and share my happiness!' [22]Then the servant who had been given two thousand dollars came in and said, 'You gave me two thousand dollars, sir. Look! Here are another two thousand dollars that I have earned.' [23]'Well done, good and faithful servant!' said his master. 'You have been faithful in managing small amounts, so I will put you in charge of large amounts. Come on in and share my happiness!' [24]Then the servant who had re-

ceived one thousand dollars came in and said, 'Sir, I know you are a hard man; you reap harvests where you did not plant, and gather crops where you did not scatter seed. [25]I was afraid, so I went off and hid your money in the ground. Look! Here is what belongs to you.' [26]'You bad and lazy servant!' his master said. 'You knew, did you, that I reap harvests where I did not plant, and gather crops where I did not scatter seed? [27]Well, then, you should have deposited my money in the bank, and I would have received it all back with interest when I returned. [28]Now, take the money away from him and give it to the one who has ten thousand dollars. [29]For to every one who has, even more will be given, and he will have more than enough; but the one who has nothing, even the little he has will be taken away from him. [30]As for this useless servant—throw him outside in the darkness; there he will cry and gnash his teeth.' "

The Final Judgment

[31]"When the Son of Man comes as King, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his royal throne, [32]and all the earth's people will be gathered before him. Then he will divide them into two groups, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats: [33]he will put the sheep at his right and the goats at his left. [34]Then the King will say to the people on his right, 'You that are blessed by my Father: come! Come and receive the kingdom which has been prepared for you ever since the creation of the world. [35]I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you received me in your homes, [36]naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me, in prison and you visited me.' [37]The righteous will then answer him, 'When, Lord, did we ever see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? [38]When did we ever see you a stranger and welcome you in our homes, or naked and clothe you? [39]When did we ever see you sick or in prison, and visit you?' [40]The King will answer back, 'I tell you, indeed, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these brothers of mine, you did it for me!'

[41]"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Away from

me, you that are under God's curse! Away to the eternal fire which has been prepared for the Devil and his angels! 42I was hungry but you would not feed me, thirsty but you would not give me drink; 43I was a stranger but you would not welcome me in your homes, naked but you would not clothe me; I was sick and in prison but you would not take care of me.' 44Then they will answer him, 'When, Lord, did we ever see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and we would not help you?' 45The King will answer them back, 'I tell you, indeed, whenever you refused to help one of these least important ones, you refused to help me.' 46These, then, will be sent off to eternal punishment; the righteous will go to eternal life."

The Plot against Jesus

(Also Mark 14.1–2; Luke 22.1–2; John 11.45–53)

26 When Jesus had finished teaching all these things, he said to his disciples, 2"In two days, as you know, it will be the Feast of Passover, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be nailed to the cross."

3Then the chief priests and the Jewish elders met together in the palace of Caiaphas, the High Priest, 4and made plans to arrest Jesus secretly and put him to death. 5"We must not do it during the feast," they said, "or the people will riot."

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

(Also Mark 14.3–9; John 12.1–8)

6While Jesus was at the house of Simon the leper, in Bethany, 7a woman came to him with an alabaster jar filled with an expensive perfume, which she poured on Jesus' head as he was eating. 8The disciples saw this and became angry. "Why all this waste?" they asked. 9"This perfume could have been sold for a large amount and the money given to the poor!"

10Jesus knew what they were saying and said to them, "Why are you bothering this woman? It is a fine and beautiful thing that she has done for me. 11You will always have poor people with you, but I will not be with you always. 12What she did was to pour this perfume on my body to get me ready for burial. 13Now, remember this! Wherever this gospel is preached, all over the

world, what she has done will be told in memory of her."

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

(Also Mark 14.10–11; Luke 22.3–6)

14 Then one of the twelve disciples—the one named
Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests 15 and said,
"What will you give me if I hand Jesus over to you?"
They counted out thirty silver coins and gave them to
him. 16 From then on Judas was looking for a good
chance to betray Jesus.

Jesus Eats the Passover Meal with His Disciples

(Also Mark 14.12–21; Luke 22.7–14, 21–23; John 13.21–30)

17 On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread
the disciples came to Jesus and asked him, "Where do
you want us to get the Passover meal ready for you?"
18 "Go to a certain man in the city," he said to them,
"and tell him: 'The Teacher says, My hour has come; my
disciples and I will celebrate the Passover at your
house.' "
19 The disciples did as Jesus had told them and pre-
pared the Passover meal.
20 When it was evening Jesus and the twelve disciples
sat down to eat. 21 During the meal Jesus said, "I tell you,
one of you will betray me."
22 The disciples were very upset and began to ask him,
one after the other, "Surely you don't mean me, Lord?"
23 Jesus answered, "One who dips his bread in the dish
with me will betray me. 24 The Son of Man will die as the
Scriptures say he will, but how terrible for that man who
will betray the Son of Man! It would have been better
for that man if he had never been born!"
25 Judas, the traitor, spoke up. "Surely you don't mean
me, Teacher?" he asked.
Jesus answered, "So you say."

The Lord's Supper

(Also Mark 14.22–26; Luke 22.15–20; 1 Cor. 11.23–25)

26 While they were eating, Jesus took the bread, gave
a prayer of thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples.
"Take and eat it," he said; "this is my body."
27 Then he took the cup, gave thanks to God, and gave
it to them. "Drink it, all of you," he said; 28 "this is my

blood, which seals God's covenant, my blood poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. [29]I tell you, I will never again drink this wine until the day I drink the new wine with you in my Father's Kingdom."

[30]Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

(Also Mark 14.27–31; Luke 22.31–34; John 13.36–38)

[31]Then Jesus said to them, "This very night all of you will run away and leave me, because the scripture says, 'God will kill the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' [32]But after I am raised to life I will go to Galilee ahead of you."

[33]Peter spoke up and said to Jesus, "I will never leave you, even though all the rest do!"

[34]"Remember this!" Jesus said to Peter. "Before the rooster crows tonight you will say three times that you do not know me."

[35]Peter answered, "I will never say I do not know you, even if I have to die with you!"

And all the disciples said the same thing.

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

(Also Mark 14.32–42; Luke 22.39–46)

[36]Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." [37]He took with him Peter, and Zebedee's two sons. Grief and anguish came over him, [38]and he said to them, "The sorrow in my heart is so great that it almost crushes me. Stay here and watch with me."

[39]He went a little farther on, threw himself face down to the ground, and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, take this cup away from me! But not what I want, but what you want."

[40]Then he returned to the three disciples and found them asleep; and he said to Peter, "How is it that you three were not able to watch with me for one hour? [41]Keep watch, and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

[42]Again a second time Jesus went away and prayed, "My Father, if this cup cannot be taken away unless I

Take this cup away from me!

drink it, your will be done." [43]He returned once more and found the disciples asleep; they could not keep their eyes open.

[44]Again Jesus left them, went away, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. [45]Then he returned to the disciples and said, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look! The hour has come for the Son of Man to be handed over to the power of sinful men. [46]Get up, let us go. Look, here is the man who is betraying me!"

The Arrest of Jesus

(Also Mark 14.43–50; Luke 22.47–53; John 18.3–12)

[47]Jesus was still speaking when Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived. With him was a large crowd carrying swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests and the Jewish elders. [48]The traitor had given the crowd a signal: "The man I kiss is the one you want. Arrest him!"

[49]When Judas arrived he went straight to Jesus and said, "Peace be with you, Teacher," and kissed him.

[50]Jesus answered, "Be quick about it, friend!"

Then they came up, arrested Jesus, and held him tight. [51]One of those who were with Jesus drew his sword and struck at the High Priest's slave, cutting off his ear. [52]Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back in its place, because all who take the sword will die by the sword. [53]Don't you know that I could call on my

Father for help and at once he would send me more than twelve armies of angels? [54]But in that case, how could the Scriptures come true that say it must happen in this way?"

[55]Then Jesus spoke to the crowd, "Did you have to come with swords and clubs to capture me, as though I were an outlaw? Every day I sat down and taught in the temple, and you did not arrest me. [56]But all this has happened to make come true what the prophets wrote in the Scriptures."

Then all the disciples left him and ran away.

Jesus before the Council

(Also Mark 14.53–65; Luke 22.54–55, 63–71; John 18.13–14, 19–24)

[57]Those who had arrested Jesus took him to the house of Caiaphas, the High Priest, where the teachers of the Law and the elders had gathered together. [58]Peter followed him from a distance, as far as the courtyard of the High Priest's house. He went into the courtyard and sat down with the guards, to see how it would all come out. [59]The chief priests and the whole Council tried to find some false evidence against Jesus, to put him to death: [60]but they could not find any, even though many came up and told lies about him. Finally two men stepped forward [61]and said, "This man said, 'I am able to tear down God's temple and three days later build it back up.' "

[62]The High Priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Have you no answer to give to this accusation against you?" [63]But Jesus kept quiet. Again the High Priest spoke to him, "In the name of the living God, I now put you on oath: tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God."

[64]Jesus answered him, "So you say. But I tell all of you: from this time on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right side of the Almighty, and coming on the clouds of heaven!"

[65]At this the High Priest tore his clothes and said, "Blasphemy! We don't need any more witnesses! Right here you have heard his wicked words! [66]What do you think?"

They answered, "He is guilty, and must die."

[67]Then they spat in his face and beat him; and those

who slapped him [68]said, "Prophesy for us, Messiah! Guess who hit you!"

Peter Denies Jesus

(Also Mark 14.66–72; Luke 22.56–62; John 18.15–18, 25–27)

[69]Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, when one of the High Priest's servant girls came to him and said, "You, too, were with Jesus of Galilee."

[70]But he denied it in front of them all. "I don't know what you are talking about," he answered, [71]and went on out to the entrance of the courtyard. Another servant girl saw him and said to the men there, "He was with Jesus of Nazareth."

[72]Again Peter denied it, and answered, "I swear that I don't know that man!"

[73]After a little while the men standing there came to Peter. "Of course you are one of them," they said. "After all, the way you speak gives you away!"

[74]Then Peter made a vow: "May God punish me if I am not telling the truth! I do not know that man!"

Just then a rooster crowed, [75]and Peter remembered what Jesus had told him, "Before the rooster crows, you will say three times that you do not know me." He went out and wept bitterly.

Jesus Taken to Pilate

(Also Mark 15.1; Luke 23.1–2; John 18.28–32)

27 Early in the morning all the chief priests and the Jewish elders made their plan against Jesus to put him to death. [2]They put him in chains, took him, and handed him over to Pilate, the Roman governor.

The Death of Judas

(Also Acts 1.18–19)

[3]When Judas, the traitor, saw that Jesus had been condemned, he repented and took back the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. [4]"I have sinned by betraying an innocent man to death!" he said.

"What do we care about that?" they answered. "That is your business!"

[5]Judas threw the money into the sanctuary and left them; then he went off and hanged himself.

[6]The chief priests picked up the money and said,

"This is blood money, and it is against our Law to put it in the temple treasury." [7]After reaching an agreement about it, they used the money to buy Potter's Field, as a cemetery for foreigners. [8]That is why that field is called "Field of Blood" to this very day.

[9]Then what the prophet Jeremiah had said came true, "They took the thirty silver coins, the amount the people of Israel had agreed to pay for him, [10]and used them to buy the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

Pilate Questions Jesus

(Also Mark 15.2–5; Luke 23.3–5; John 18.33–38)

[11]Jesus stood before the Governor, who questioned him. "Are you the king of the Jews?" he asked.

"So you say," answered Jesus. [12]He said nothing, however, to the accusations of the chief priests and elders.

[13]So Pilate said to him, "Don't you hear all these things they accuse you of?"

[14]But Jesus refused to answer a single word, so that the Governor was greatly surprised.

Jesus Sentenced to Death

(Also Mark 15.6–15; Luke 23.13–25; John 18.39—19.16)

[15]At every Passover Feast the Governor was in the habit of setting free any prisoner the crowd asked for. [16]At that time there was a well-known prisoner named Jesus Barabbas. [17]So when the crowd gathered, Pilate asked them, "Which one do you want me to set free for you? Jesus Barabbas or Jesus called the Christ?" [18]He knew very well that they had handed Jesus over to him because they were jealous.

[19]While Pilate was sitting in the judgment hall, his wife sent him a message: "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, because in a dream last night I suffered much on account of him."

[20]The chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask Pilate to set Barabbas free and have Jesus put to death. [21]But the Governor asked them, "Which one of these two do you want me to set free for you?"

"Barabbas!" they answered.

22"What, then, shall I do with Jesus called the Christ?" Pilate asked them.

"Nail him to the cross!" they all answered.

23But Pilate asked, "What crime has he committed?"

Then they started shouting at the top of their voices, "Nail him to the cross!"

24When Pilate saw it was no use to go on, but that a riot might break out, he took some water, washed his hands in front of the crowd, and said, "I am not responsible for the death of this man! This is your doing!"

25The whole crowd answered back, "Let the punishment for his death fall on us and on our children!"

26Then Pilate set Barabbas free for them; he had Jesus whipped and handed him over to be nailed to the cross.

The Soldiers Make Fun of Jesus

(Also Mark 15.16–20; John 19.2–3)

27Then Pilate's soldiers took Jesus into the governor's palace, and the whole company gathered around him. 28They stripped off his clothes and put a scarlet robe on him. 29Then they made a crown out of thorny branches and placed it on his head, and put a stick in his right hand; then they knelt before him and made fun of him. "Long live the King of the Jews!" they said. 30They spat on him, and took the stick and hit him over the head. 31When they had finished making fun of him, they took the robe off and put his own clothes back on him. Then they led him out to nail him to the cross.

Jesus Nailed to the Cross

(Also Mark 15.21–32; Luke 23.26–43; John 19.17–27)

32As they were going out they met a man from Cyrene named Simon, and they forced him to carry Jesus' cross. 33They came to a place called Golgotha, which means "The Place of the Skull." 34There they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; after tasting it, however, he would not drink it.

35They nailed him to the cross, and then divided his clothes among them by throwing dice. 36After that they sat there and watched him. 37Above his head they put the written notice of the accusation against him: "This

is Jesus, the King of the Jews." [38]Then they nailed two bandits to crosses with Jesus, one on his right and the other on his left.

[39]People passing by shook their heads and hurled insults at Jesus: [40]"You were going to tear down the temple and build it back up in three days! Save yourself, if you are God's Son! Come on down from the cross!"

[41]In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the Law and the elders made fun of him: [42]"He saved others but he cannot save himself! Isn't he the King of Israel? If he will come down off the cross now, we will believe in him! [43]He trusts in God and says he is God's Son. Well, then, let us see if God wants to save him now!"

[44]Even the bandits who had been crucified with him insulted him in the same way.

The Death of Jesus

(Also Mark 15.33–41; Luke 23.44–49; John 19.28–30)

[45]At noon the whole country was covered with darkness, which lasted for three hours. [46]At about three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud shout, "*Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?*" which means, "My God, my God, why did you abandon me?"

[47]Some of the people standing there heard him and said, "He is calling for Elijah!" [48]One of them ran up at once, took a sponge, soaked it in cheap wine, put it on the end of a stick, and tried to make him drink it.

[49]But the others said, "Wait, let us see if Elijah is coming to save him!"

[50]Jesus again gave a loud cry, and breathed his last.

[51]Then the curtain hanging in the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split apart, [52]the graves broke open, and many of God's people who had died were raised to life. [53]They left the graves; and after Jesus rose from death they went into the Holy City, where many people saw them.

[54]When the army officer and the soldiers with him who were watching Jesus saw the earthquake and everything else that happened, they were terrified and said, "He really was the Son of God!"

There were many women there

55There were many women there, looking on from a
distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee and
helped him. 56Among them were Mary Magdalene,
Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother
of Zebedee's sons.

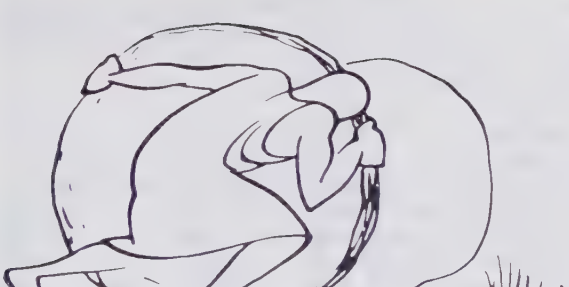
The Burial of Jesus

(Also Mark 15.42–47; Luke 23.50–56; John 19.38–42)

57When it was evening, a rich man from Arimathea
arrived; his name was Joseph, and he also was a disciple
of Jesus. 58He went into the presence of Pilate and asked
for the body of Jesus. Pilate gave orders for the body to
be given to Joseph. 59So Joseph took it, wrapped it in a
new linen sheet, 60and placed it in his own grave, which
he had just recently dug out of the rock. Then he rolled
a large stone across the entrance to the grave and went
away. 61Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sit-
ting there, facing the grave.

The Guard at the Grave

62On the next day — that is, the day following Friday
— the chief priests and the Pharisees met with Pilate
63and said, "Sir, we remember that while that liar was



He rolled a large stone across the entrance

still alive he said, 'I will be raised to life after three days.' [64]Give orders, then, for the grave to be safely guarded until the third day, so that his disciples will not be able to go and steal him, and then tell the people, 'He was raised from death.' This last lie would be even worse than the first one."

[65]"Take a guard," Pilate told them; "go and guard the grave as best you can."

[66]So they left, and made the grave secure by putting a seal on the stone and leaving the guard on watch.

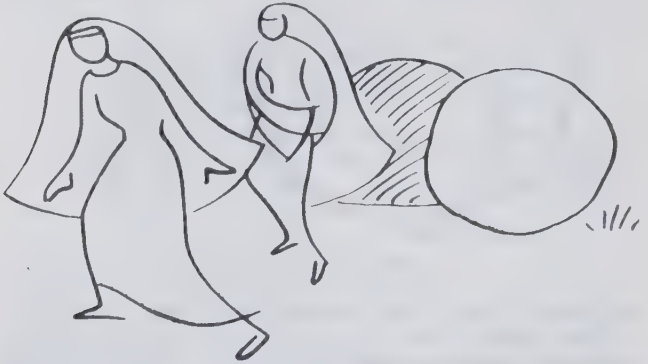
The Resurrection

(Also Mark 16.1–10; Luke 24.1–12; John 20.1–10)

28 After the Sabbath, as Sunday morning was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the grave. [2]Suddenly there was a strong earthquake; an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled the stone away, and sat on it. [3]His appearance was like lightning and his clothes were white as snow. [4]The guards were so afraid that they trembled and became like dead men.

[5]The angel spoke to the women. "You must not be afraid," he said. "I know you are looking for Jesus, who was nailed to the cross. [6]He is not here; he has been raised, just as he said. Come here and see the place

where he lay. 7Quickly, now, go and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from death, and now he is going to Galilee ahead of you; there you will see him!' Remember what I have told you."



They left the grave in a hurry

8So they left the grave in a hurry, afraid and yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.

9Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Peace be with you." They came up to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. 10"Do not be afraid," Jesus said to them. "Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

The Report of the Guard

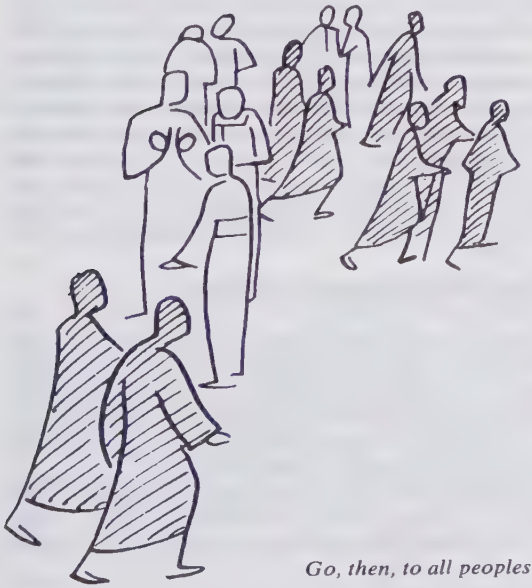
11While the women went on their way, some of the soldiers guarding the grave went back to the city and told the chief priests everything that had happened. 12The chief priests met with the elders and made their plan; they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers 13and said, "You are to say that his disciples came during the night and stole his body while you were asleep. 14And if the Governor should hear of this, we will convince him and you will have nothing to worry about."

15The guards took the money and did what they were told to do. To this very day that is the report spread around by the Jews.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

(Also Mark 16.14–18; Luke 24.36–49; John 20.19–23; Acts 1.6–8)

16 The eleven disciples went to the hill in Galilee
where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him
they worshiped him, even though some of them
doubted. 18 Jesus drew near and said to them, "I have
been given all authority in heaven and on earth. 19 Go,
then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my dis-
ciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son,
and the Holy Spirit, 20 and teach them to obey every-
thing I have commanded you. And remember! I will be
with you always, to the end of the age."



Go, then, to all peoples everywhere

THE GOSPEL OF MARK

The Preaching of John the Baptist

(Also Matt. 3.1–12; Luke 3.1–18; John 1.19–28)

1 This is the Good News about Jesus Christ, the Son
of God. [2]It began as the prophet Isaiah had written:
" 'Here is my messenger,' says God; 'I will
send him ahead of you to open the
way for you.'
[3] Someone is shouting in the desert,
'Get the Lord's road ready for him;
make a straight path for him to
travel!' "

[4]So John appeared in the desert, baptizing people and preaching his message. "Turn away from your sins and be baptized," he told the people, "and God will forgive your sins." [5]Everybody from the region of Judea and the city of Jerusalem went out to hear John. They confessed their sins and he baptized them in the Jordan River.

[6]John wore clothes made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; he ate locusts and wild honey. [7]He announced to the people, "The man who will come after me is much greater than I am; I am not good enough even to bend down and untie his sandals. [8]I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus

(Also Matt. 3.13—4.11; Luke 3.21–22; 4.1-13)

[9]Not long afterward Jesus came from Nazareth, in the region of Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan. [10]As soon as Jesus came up out of the water he saw heaven opening and the Spirit coming down on him like a dove. [11]And a voice came from heaven, "You are my own dear Son. I am well pleased with you."

[12]At once the Spirit made him go into the desert. [13]He was there forty days, being tempted by Satan. Wild animals were there also, but angels came and helped him.

Jesus Calls Four Fishermen

(Also Matt. 4.12–22; Luke 4.14–15; 5.1–11)

[14]After John had been put in prison, Jesus went to

Galilee and preached the Good News from God. [15]"The right time has come," he said, "and the Kingdom of God is near! Turn away from your sins and believe the Good News!"

[16]As Jesus walked by Lake Galilee, he saw two fishermen, Simon and his brother Andrew, catching fish in the lake with a net. [17]Jesus said to them, "Come with me and I will teach you to catch men." [18]At once they left their nets and went with him.

Come with me

[19]He went a little farther on and saw two other brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee. They were in their boat getting their nets ready. [20]As soon as Jesus saw them he called them; they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and went with Jesus.

A Man with an Evil Spirit

(Also Luke 4.31–37)

[21]They came to the town of Capernaum, and on the next Sabbath day Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. [22]The people who heard him were amazed at the way he taught. He wasn't like the teachers of the Law; instead, he taught with authority.

[23]Just then a man with an evil spirit in him came into the synagogue and screamed, [24]"What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Are you here to destroy us? I know who you are: you are God's holy messenger!"

[25]Jesus commanded the spirit, "Be quiet, and come out of the man!"

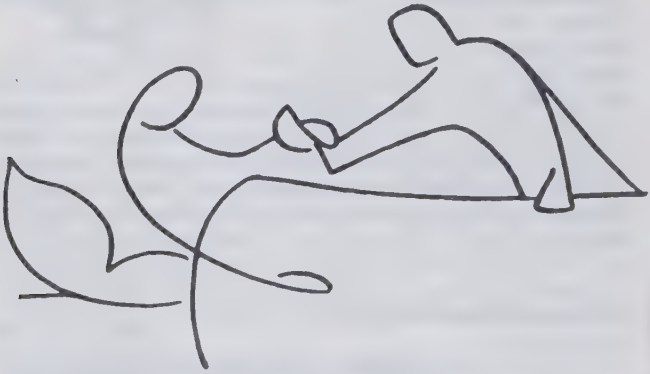
[26]The evil spirit shook the man hard, gave a loud scream, and came out of him. [27]The people were all so amazed that they started saying to each other, "What is this? Some kind of new teaching? This man has authority to give orders to the evil spirits, and they obey him!"

[28]And so the news about Jesus spread quickly everywhere in the region of Galilee.

Jesus Heals Many People

(Also Matt. 8.14–17; Luke 4.38–41)

[29]They left the synagogue and went straight to the home of Simon and Andrew; and James and John went with them. [30]Simon's mother-in-law was sick in bed with a fever, and as soon as Jesus got there he was told about her. [31]He went to her, took her by the hand, and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.



Took her by the hand and helped her up

[32]When evening came, after the sun had set, people brought to Jesus all the sick and those who had demons. [33]All the people of the town gathered in front of the house. [34]Jesus healed many who were sick with all kinds of diseases and drove out many demons. He would not let the demons say anything, because they knew who he was.

Jesus Preaches in Galilee

(Also Luke 4.42–44)

[35]Very early the next morning, long before daylight, Jesus got up and left the house. He went out of town to

a lonely place, where he prayed. [36]But Simon and his companions went out searching for him; [37]when they found him they said, "Everyone is looking for you."

[38]But Jesus answered, "We must go on to the other villages around here. I have to preach in them also, because that is why I came."

[39]So he traveled all over Galilee, preaching in the synagogues and driving out demons.

Jesus Makes a Leper Clean

(Also Matt. 8.1–4; Luke 5.12–16)

[40]A leper came to Jesus, knelt down, and begged him for help. "If you want to," he said, "you can make me clean."

[41]Jesus was filled with pity, and reached out and touched him. "I do want to," he answered. "Be clean!" [42]At once the leprosy left the man and he was clean. [43]Then Jesus spoke harshly with him and sent him away at once. [44]"Listen," he said, "don't tell this to anyone. But go straight to the priest and let him examine you; then offer the sacrifice that Moses ordered, to prove to everyone that you are now clean."

[45]But the man went away and began to spread the news everywhere. Indeed, he talked so much that Jesus could not go into a town publicly. Instead, he stayed out in lonely places, and people came to him from everywhere.

Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man

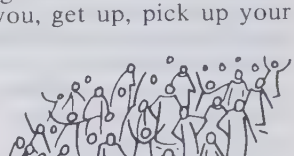
(Also Matt. 9.1–8; Luke 5.17–26)

2 A few days later Jesus came back to Capernaum, and the news spread that he was at home. [2]So many people came together that there wasn't any room left, not even out in front of the door. Jesus was preaching the message to them, [3]when a paralyzed man, carried by four men, was brought to him. [4]Because of the crowd, however, they could not get the man to Jesus. So they made a hole in the roof right above the place where Jesus was. When they had made an opening, they let the man down, lying on his mat. [5]Jesus saw how much faith they had, and said to the paralyzed man, "My son, your sins are forgiven."

[6]Some teachers of the Law who were sitting there

thought to themselves, 7"How does he dare talk against God like this? No man can forgive sins; only God can!"

8At once Jesus knew their secret thoughts, so he said to them, "Why do you think such things? 9Is it easier to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, pick up your mat, and walk'? 10I will prove to you, then, that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralyzed man, 11"I tell you, get up, pick up your mat, and go home!"



Picked up his mat and hurried away

12While they all watched, the man got up, picked up his mat, and hurried away. They were all completely amazed and praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

Jesus Calls Levi

(Also Matt. 9.9–13; Luke 5.27–32)

13Jesus went back again to the shore of Lake Galilee. A crowd came to him and he started teaching them.

[14]As he walked along he saw a tax collector, Levi, the son of Alphaeus, sitting in his office. Jesus said to him, "Follow me." Levi got up and followed him.

[15]Later on Jesus was having a meal in Levi's house. A large number of tax collectors and outcasts was following Jesus, and many of them joined him and his disciples at the table. [16]Some teachers of the Law, who were Pharisees, saw that Jesus was eating with these outcasts and tax collectors; so they asked his disciples, "Why does he eat with such people?"

Why does he eat with such people?

[17]Jesus heard them and answered, "People who are well do not need a doctor, but only those who are sick. I have not come to call the respectable people, but the outcasts."

The Question about Fasting

(Also Matt. 9.14–17; Luke 5.33–39)

[18]On one occasion the followers of John the Baptist and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came to Jesus and asked him, "Why is it that the disciples of

John the Baptist and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but yours do not?"

[19]Jesus answered, "Do you expect the guests at a wedding party to go without food? Of course not! As long as the bridegroom is with them they will not do that. [20]But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; when that day comes then they will go without food.

[21]"No one uses a piece of new cloth to patch up an old coat. If he does, the new patch will tear off some of the old cloth, making an even bigger hole. [22]Nor does anyone pour new wine into used wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the skins will be ruined. No! Fresh skins for new wine!"

The Question about the Sabbath

(Also Matt. 12.1–8; Luke 6.1–5)

[23]Jesus was walking through some wheat fields on a Sabbath day. As his disciples walked along with him, they began to pick the heads of wheat. [24]So the Pharisees said to Jesus, "Look, it is against our Law for your disciples to do this on the Sabbath!"

[25]Jesus answered, "Have you never read what David did that time when he needed something to eat? He and his men were hungry, [26]so he went into the house of God and ate the bread offered to God. This happened when Abiathar was the High Priest. According to our Law only the priests may eat this bread —but David ate it, and even gave it to his men."

[27]And Jesus concluded, "The Sabbath was made for the good of man; man was not made for the Sabbath. [28]So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

The Man with a Crippled Hand

(Also Matt. 12.9–14; Luke 6.6–11)

3 Then Jesus went back to the synagogue, where there was a man who had a crippled hand. [2]Some people were there who wanted to accuse Jesus of doing wrong; so they watched him very closely, to see whether he would cure him on the Sabbath. [3]Jesus said to the man with the crippled hand, "Come up here to the front." [4]Then he asked the people, "What does our Law

allow us to do on the Sabbath? To help, or to harm? To save a man's life, or to destroy it?"

But they did not say a thing. [5]Jesus was angry as he looked around at them, but at the same time he felt sorry for them, because they were so stubborn and wrong. Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out and it became well again. [6]So the Pharisees left the synagogue and met at once with some members of Herod's party; and they made plans against Jesus to kill him.

A Crowd by the Lake

[7]Jesus and his disciples went away to Lake Galilee, and a large crowd followed him. They came from Galilee, from Judea, [8]from Jerusalem, from the territory of

This large crowd came to Jesus

Idumea, from the territory on the other side of the Jordan, and from the neighborhood of the cities of Tyre and Sidon. This large crowd came to Jesus because they heard of the things he was doing. [9]The crowd was so large that Jesus told his disciples to get a boat ready for him, so the people would not crush him. [10]He had healed many people, and all the sick kept pushing their way to him in order to touch him. [11]And whenever the people who had evil spirits in them saw him they would fall down before him and scream, "You are the Son of God!"

[12]Jesus gave a stern command to the evil spirits not to tell who he was.

Jesus Chooses the Twelve Apostles

(Also Matt. 10.1–4; Luke 6.12–16)

[13]Then Jesus went up a hill and called to himself the men he wanted. They came to him [14]and he chose twelve, whom he named apostles. "I have chosen you to be with me," he told them; "I will also send you out to preach, [15]and you will have authority to drive out demons."

[16]These are the twelve he chose: Simon (Jesus gave him the name Peter); [17]James and his brother John, the sons of Zebedee (Jesus gave them the name Boanerges, which means "Men of Thunder"); [18]Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James, the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Patriot, [19]and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus.

Jesus and Beelzebul

(Also Matt. 12.22–32; Luke 11.14–23; 12.10)

[20]Then Jesus went home. Again such a large crowd gathered that Jesus and his disciples had no time to eat. [21]When his family heard about this they set out to get him, because people were saying, "He's gone mad!"

[22]Some teachers of the Law who had come from Jerusalem were saying, "He has Beelzebul in him!"

Others said, "It is the chief of the demons who gives him the power to drive them out."

[23]So Jesus called the people to him and told them some parables: "How can Satan drive out Satan? [24]If a country divides itself into groups that fight each other,

that country will fall apart. 25If a family divides itself into groups that fight each other, that family will fall apart. 26So if Satan's kingdom divides into groups, it cannot last, but will fall apart and come to an end.

27"No one can break into a strong man's house and take away his belongings unless he ties up the strong man first; then he can plunder his house.

28"Remember this! Men can be forgiven all their sins and all the evil things they may say. 29But whoever says evil things against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, because he has committed an eternal sin." 30(Jesus said this because some had said, "He has an evil spirit in him.")

Jesus' Mother and Brothers

(Also Matt. 12.46–50; Luke 8.19–21)

31Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. They stood outside the house and sent in a message, asking for him. 32A crowd was sitting around Jesus, and they told him, "Look, your mother and brothers are outside, and they want you."

33Jesus answered, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" 34He looked over the people sitting around him and said, "Look! Here are my mother and my brothers! 35Whoever does what God wants him to do is my brother, my sister, my mother."

The Parable of the Sower

(Also Matt. 13.1–9; Luke 8.4–8)

4 Again Jesus began to teach by Lake Galilee. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it. The boat was out in the water, while the crowd stood on the shore, at the water's edge. 2He used parables to teach them many things, and in his teaching said to them,

3"Listen! There was a man who went out to sow. 4As he scattered the seed in the field, some of it fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5Some of it fell on rocky ground, where there was little soil. The seeds soon sprouted, because the soil wasn't deep. 6Then when the sun came up it burned the young plants, and because the roots had not grown deep enough the plants soon dried up. 7Some of the seed fell among thorns,

There was a man who went out to sow

which grew up and choked the plants, and they didn't bear grain. [8]But some seeds fell in good soil, and the plants sprouted, grew, and bore grain: some had thirty grains, others sixty, and others one hundred."

[9]And Jesus concluded, "Listen, then, if you have ears to hear with!"

The Purpose of the Parables

(Also Matt. 13.10–17; Luke 8.9–10)

[10]When Jesus was alone, some of those who had heard him came to him with the twelve disciples and asked him to explain the parables. [11]"You have been given the secret of the Kingdom of God," Jesus answered. "But the others, who are on the outside, hear all things by means of parables, [12]so that,

> 'They may look and look, yet not see,
> they may listen and listen, yet not
> understand;
> for if they did, they would turn to God
> and he would forgive them.' "

Jesus Explains the Parable of the Sower

(Also Matt. 13.18–23; Luke 8.11–15)

[13]Then Jesus asked them, "Don't you understand this

parable? How, then, will you ever understand any parable? [14]The sower sows God's message. [15]Sometimes the message falls along the path; these people hear it, but as soon as they hear it Satan comes and takes away the message sown in them. [16]Other people are like the seeds that fall on rocky ground. As soon as they hear the message they receive it gladly. [17]But it does not sink deep into them, and they don't last long. So when trouble or persecution comes because of the message, they give up at once. [18]Other people are like the seeds sown among the thorns. These are the ones who hear the message, [19]but the worries about this life, the love for riches, and all other kinds of desires crowd in and choke the message, and they don't bear fruit. [20]But other people are like the seeds sown in good soil. They hear the message, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirty, some sixty, and some one hundred."

A Lamp under a Bowl

(Also Luke 8.16–18)

[21]Jesus continued, "Does anyone ever bring in a lamp and put it under a bowl or under the bed? Doesn't he put it on the lampstand? [22]Whatever is hidden away will be brought out into the open, and whatever is covered up will be uncovered. [23]Listen, then, if you have ears to hear with!"

[24]He also said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear! The same rules you use to judge others will be used by God to judge you—but with even greater severity. [25]The man who has something will be given more; the man who has nothing will have taken away from him even the little he has."

The Parable of the Growing Seed

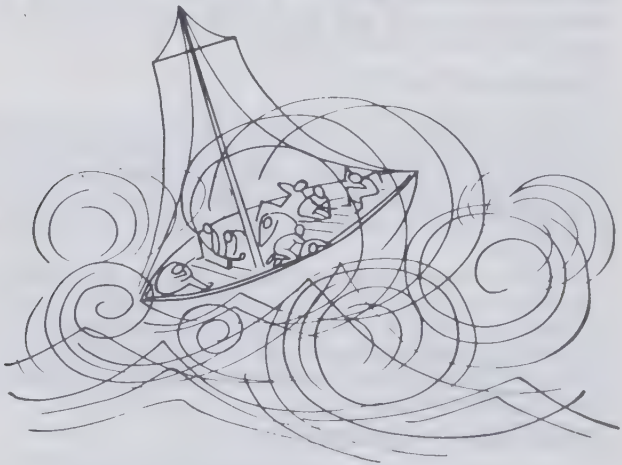
[26]Jesus went on to say, "The Kingdom of God is like a man who scatters seed in his field. [27]He sleeps at night, is up and about during the day, and all the while the seeds are sprouting and growing. Yet he does not know how it happens. [28]The soil itself makes the plants grow and bear fruit: first the tender stalk appears, then the head, and finally the head full of grain. [29]When the grain is ripe the man starts working with his sickle, because harvest time has come."

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

(Also Matt. 13.31–32, 34; Luke 13.18–19)

30 "What shall we say the Kingdom of God is like?"
asked Jesus. "What parable shall we use to explain it?
31 It is like a mustard seed, the smallest seed in the world.
A man takes it and plants it in the ground; 32 after a while
it grows up and becomes the biggest of all plants. It puts
out such large branches that the birds come and make
their nests in its shade."

33 Jesus preached his message to the people, using
many other parables like these; he told them as much as
they could understand. 34 He would not speak to them
without using parables; but when he was alone with his
disciples he would explain everything to them.



Waves began to spill over into the boat

Jesus Calms a Storm

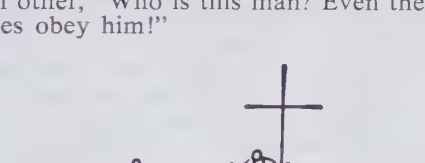
(Also Matt. 8.23–27; Luke 8.22–25)

35 On the evening of that same day Jesus said to his
disciples, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake."
36 So they left the crowd; the disciples got into the boat
that Jesus was already in, and took him with them.
Other boats were there too. 37 A very strong wind blew
up and the waves began to spill over into the boat, so

that it was about to fill with water. [38]Jesus was in the back of the boat, sleeping with his head on a pillow. The disciples woke him up and said, "Teacher, don't you care that we are about to die?"

[39]Jesus got up and commanded the wind, "Be quiet!" and said to the waves, "Be still!" The wind died down, and there was a great calm. [40]Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Why are you frightened? Are you still without faith?"

[41]But they were terribly afraid, and began to say to each other, "Who is this man? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"



And there was a great calm

Jesus Heals a Man with Evil Spirits

(Also Matt. 8.28–34; Luke 8.26–39)

5 They arrived on the other side of Lake Galilee, at the territory of the Gerasenes. [2]As soon as Jesus got out of the boat he was met by a man who came out of the burial caves. [3]This man had an evil spirit in him and lived among the graves. Nobody could keep him tied with chains any more; [4]many times his feet and hands had been tied, but every time he broke the chains, and smashed the irons on his feet. He was too strong for anyone to stop him. [5]Day and night he wandered among the graves and through the hills, screaming and cutting himself with stones.

[6]He was some distance away when he saw Jesus; so he ran, fell on his knees before him, [7]and screamed in a loud voice, "Jesus, Son of the Most High God! What do you want with me? For God's sake, I beg you, don't punish me!" [8](He said this because Jesus was saying to him, "Evil spirit, come out of this man!")

[9]So Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"

The man answered, "My name is 'Mob'—there are so

many of us!" [10]And he kept begging Jesus not to send the evil spirits out of that territory.

[11]A large herd of pigs was near by, feeding on the hillside. [12]The spirits begged Jesus, "Send us to the pigs, and let us go into them." [13]So he let them. The evil spirits went out of the man and went into the pigs. The whole herd—about two thousand pigs in all—rushed down the side of the cliff into the lake and were drowned.

[14]The men who had been taking care of the pigs ran away and spread the news in the town and among the farms. The people went out to see what had happened. [15]They came to Jesus and saw the man who used to have the mob of demons in him. He was sitting there, clothed and in his right mind; and they were all afraid. [16]Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the man with the demons, and about the pigs. [17]So they began to ask Jesus to leave their territory.

[18]As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had had the demons begged him, "Let me go with you!"

[19]But Jesus would not let him. Instead he told him, "Go back home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how kind he has been to you."

[20]So the man left and went all through the Ten Towns telling what Jesus had done for him; and all who heard it were filled with wonder.

Jairus' Daughter and the Woman Who Touched Jesus' Cloak

(Also Matt. 9.18–26; Luke 8.40–56)

[21]Jesus went back across to the other side of the lake. There at the lakeside a large crowd gathered around him. [22]Jairus, an official of the local synagogue, came up, and when he saw Jesus he threw himself down at his feet [23]and begged him with all his might, "My little daughter is very sick. Please come and place your hands on her, so that she will get well and live!"

[24]Then Jesus started off with him. So many people were going along with him that they were crowding him from every side.

25There was a woman who had suffered terribly from
severe bleeding for twelve years, 26even though she had
been treated by many doctors. She had spent all her
money, but instead of getting better she got worse all the
time. 27She had heard about Jesus, so she came in the
crowd behind him. 28"If I touch just his clothes," she
said to herself, "I shall get well."
29She touched his cloak and her bleeding stopped at
once: and she had the feeling inside herself that she
was cured of her trouble. 30At once Jesus knew that
power had gone out of him. So he turned around in the
crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?"
31His disciples answered, "You see how the people
are crowding you; why do you ask who touched you?"
32But Jesus kept looking around to see who had
done it. 33The woman realized what had happened to
her; so she came, trembling with fear, fell at his feet,
and told him the whole truth. 34Jesus said to her, "My
daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace,
and be healed from your trouble."
35While Jesus was saying this, some messengers
came from Jairus' house and told him, "Your daughter
has died. Why should you bother the Teacher any
longer?"
36Jesus paid no attention to what they said, but told
him, "Don't be afraid, only believe." 37Then he did not
let anyone else go on with him except Peter and James
and his brother John. 38They arrived at the official's
house, where Jesus saw the confusion and heard all the
loud crying and wailing. 39He went in and said to
them, "Why all this confusion? Why are you crying?
The child is not dead—she is only sleeping!"
40They started making fun of him, so he put them all
out, took the child's father and mother, and his three
disciples, and went into the room where the child was
lying. 41He took her by the hand and said to her, *"Tali-
tha, koum,"* which means, "Little girl! Get up, I tell
you!"
42She got up at once and started walking around.
(She was twelve years old.) When this happened they
were completely amazed! 43But Jesus gave them strict
orders not to tell anyone, and said, "Give her some-
thing to eat."

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

(Also Matt. 13.53–58; Luke 4.16–30)

6 Jesus left that place and went back to his home
town, followed by his disciples. [2]On the Sabbath
day he began to teach in the synagogue. Many people
were there, and when they heard him they were all
amazed. "Where did he get all this?" they asked. "What
wisdom is this that has been given him? How does he
perform miracles? [3]Isn't he the carpenter, the son of
Mary, and the brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Si-
mon? Aren't his sisters living here?" And so they re-
jected him.

[4]Jesus said to them, "A prophet is respected every-
where except in his home town, and by his relatives
and his family."

[5]He was not able to perform any miracles there,
except that he placed his hands on a few sick people
and healed them. [6]He was greatly surprised, because
they did not have faith.

Jesus Sends out the Twelve Disciples

(Also Matt. 10.5–15; Luke 9.1–6)

Then Jesus went to the villages around there, teaching
the people. [7]He called the twelve disciples together and
sent them out two by two. He gave them authority over
the evil spirits [8]and ordered them, "Don't take anything
with you on the trip except a walking stick; no bread, no
beggar's bag, no money in your pockets. [9]Wear sandals,
but don't wear an extra shirt." [10]He also told them,
"Wherever you are welcomed, stay in the same house
until you leave that town. [11]If you come to a place where
people do not welcome you or will not listen to you,
leave it and shake the dust off your feet. This will be a
warning to them!"

[12]So they went out and preached that people should
turn away from their sins. [13]They drove out many de-
mons, and rubbed oil on many sick people and healed
them.

The Death of John the Baptist

(Also Matt. 14.1–12; Luke 9.7–9)

[14]Now King Herod heard about all this, because

Jesus' reputation had spread everywhere. Some people were saying, "John the Baptist has come back to life! That is why these powers are at work in him."

[15]Others, however, said, "He is Elijah."

Others said, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of long ago."

[16]When Herod heard it he said, "He is John the Baptist! I had his head cut off, but he has come back to life!" [17]Herod himself had ordered John's arrest, and had him tied up and put in prison. Herod did this because of Herodias, whom he had married, even though she was the wife of his brother Philip. [18]John the Baptist kept telling Herod, "It isn't right for you to marry your brother's wife!"

[19]So Herodias held a grudge against John and wanted to kill him, but she could not because of Herod. [20]Herod was afraid of John because he knew that John was a good and holy man, and so he kept him safe. He liked to listen to him, even though he became greatly disturbed every time he heard him.

[21]Finally Herodias got her chance. It was on Herod's birthday, when he gave a feast for all the top government officials, the military chiefs, and the leading citizens of Galilee. [22]The daughter of Herodias came in and danced, and pleased Herod and his guests. So the king said to the girl, "What would you like to have? I will give you anything you want." [23]With many vows he said to her, "I promise that I will give you anything you ask for, even as much as half my kingdom!"

[24]So the girl went out and asked her mother, "What shall I ask for?"

"The head of John the Baptist," she answered.

[25]The girl hurried back at once to the king and demanded, "I want you to give me right now the head of John the Baptist on a plate!"

[26]This made the king very sad; but he could not refuse her, because of the vows he had made in front of all his guests. [27]So he sent off a guard at once with orders to bring John's head. The guard left, went to the prison, and cut John's head off; [28]then he brought it on a plate and gave it to the girl, who gave it to her mother. [29]When John's disciples heard about this, they came and got his body and laid it in a grave.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

(Also Matt. 14.13–21; Luke 9.10–17; John 6.1–14)

30The apostles returned and met with Jesus, and told
him all they had done and taught. 31There were so many
people coming and going that Jesus and his disciples
didn't even have time to eat. So he said to them, "Let
us go off by ourselves to some place where we will be
alone and you can rest a while." 32So they started out
in the boat by themselves to a lonely place.

33Many people, however, saw them leave and knew
at once who they were; so they went from all the
towns and ran ahead by land and got to the place
ahead of Jesus and his disciples. 34When Jesus got out
of the boat, he saw this large crowd, and his heart was
filled with pity for them, because they were like sheep
without a shepherd. So he began to teach them many
things. 35When it was getting late, his disciples came to
him and said, "It is already very late, and this is a
lonely place. 36Send the people away, and let them go
to the nearby farms and villages and buy themselves
something to eat."

37"You yourselves give them something to eat,"
Jesus answered.

They asked, "Do you want us to go and buy two
hundred dollars' worth of bread and feed them?"

38So Jesus asked them, "How much bread do you
have? Go and see."

When they found out they told him, "Five loaves,
and two fish also."

39Jesus then told his disciples to make all the people
divide into groups and sit down on the green grass.
40So the people sat down in rows, in groups of a hun-
dred and groups of fifty. 41Then Jesus took the five
loaves and the two fish, looked up to heaven, and gave
thanks to God. He broke the loaves and gave them to
his disciples to distribute to the people. He also di-
vided the two fish among them all. 42Everyone ate and
had enough. 43Then the disciples took up twelve bas-
kets full of what was left of the bread and of the fish.
44The number of men who ate the bread was five thou-
sand.

Jesus Walks on the Water

(Also Matt. 14.22–33; John 6.15–21)

45 At once Jesus made his disciples get into the boat
and go ahead of him to Bethsaida, on the other side of
the lake, while he sent the crowd away. 46 After saying
good-bye to the disciples, he went away to a hill to pray.
47 When evening came the boat was in the middle of the
lake, while Jesus was alone on land. 48 He saw that his
disciples were having trouble rowing the boat, because
the wind was blowing against them; so sometime be-
tween three and six o'clock in the morning he came to
them, walking on the water. He was going to pass them
by. 49 But they saw him walking on the water. "It's a
ghost!" they thought, and screamed. 50 For when they all
saw him they were terrified.

It's a ghost!

Jesus spoke to them at once, "Courage!" he said. "It
is I. Don't be afraid!" 51 Then he got into the boat with
them, and the wind died down. The disciples were
completely amazed, 52 because they had not understood
what the loaves of bread meant; their minds could not
grasp it.

Jesus Heals the Sick in Gennesaret

(Also Matt. 14.34–36)

53 They crossed the lake and came to land at Gennesaret, where they tied up the boat. 54 As they left the boat, people recognized Jesus at once. 55 So they ran throughout the whole region and brought the sick lying on their mats to him, wherever they heard he was. 56 And everywhere Jesus went, to villages, towns, or farms, people would take their sick to the market places and beg him to let the sick at least touch the edge of his cloak; and all who touched it were made well.

The Teaching of the Ancestors

(Also Matt. 15.1–9)

7 The Pharisees and some teachers of the Law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus. 2 They noticed that some of his disciples were eating their food with unclean hands—that is, they had not washed them in the way the Pharisees said people should.

3 For the Pharisees, as well as the rest of the Jews, follow the teaching they received from their ancestors: they do not eat unless they wash their hands in the proper way, 4 nor do they eat anything that comes from the market unless they wash it first. And they follow many other rules which they have received, such as the proper way to wash cups, pots, copper bowls, and beds.

5 So the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law asked Jesus, "Why is it that your disciples do not follow the teaching handed down by our ancestors, but instead eat with unclean hands?"

6 Jesus answered them, "How right Isaiah was when he prophesied about you! You are hypocrites, just as he wrote:

> 'These people, says God, honor me with their words,
> but their heart is really far away from me.
> It is no use for them to worship me,
> because they teach man-made commandments as though they were God's rules!'

8"You put aside the commandment of God and obey
the teachings of men."
9And Jesus continued, "You have a clever way of
rejecting God's law in order to uphold your own teach-
ing. 10For Moses commanded, 'Honor your father and
mother,' and, 'Anyone who says bad things about his
father or mother must be put to death.' 11But you
teach that if a person has something he could use to
help his father or mother, but says, 'This is Corban'
(which means, it belongs to God), 12he is excused from
helping his father or mother. 13In this way you disre-
gard the word of God with the teaching you pass on
to others. And there are many other things like this
that you do."

The Things That Make a Person Unclean

(Also Matt. 15.10–20)

14Then Jesus called the crowd to him once more and
said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand.
15There is nothing that goes into a person from the
outside which can make him unclean. Rather, it is what
comes out of a person that makes him unclean. [16Lis-
ten, then, if you have ears to hear with!]"
17When he left the crowd and went into the house, his
disciples asked him about this parable. 18"You are no
more intelligent than the others," Jesus said to them.
"Don't you understand? Nothing that goes into a person
from the outside can really make him unclean, 19because
it does not go into his heart but into his stomach and
then goes on out of the body." (In saying this Jesus
declared that all foods are fit to be eaten.)
20And he went on to say, "It is what comes out of a
person that makes him unclean. 21For from the inside,
from a man's heart, come the evil ideas which lead him
to do immoral things, to rob, kill, 22commit adultery, be
greedy, and do all sorts of evil things; deceit, indecency,
jealousy, slander, pride, and folly—23all these evil things
come from inside a man and make him unclean."

A Woman's Faith

(Also Matt. 15.21-28)

24Then Jesus left and went away to the territory near
the city of Tyre. He went into a house, and did not want

anyone to know he was there; but he could not stay hidden. [25]A certain woman, whose daughter had an evil spirit in her, heard about Jesus and came to him at once and fell at his feet. [26]The woman was a foreigner, born in Phoenicia of Syria. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter. [27]But Jesus answered, "Let us feed the children first; it isn't right to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs."

[28]"Sir," she answered, "even the dogs under the table eat the children's leftovers!"

[29]So Jesus said to her, "For such an answer you may go home; the demon has gone out of your daughter!"

[30]She went back home and found her child lying on the bed; the demon had indeed gone out of her.

Jesus Heals a Deaf and Dumb Man

[31]Jesus then left the neighborhood of Tyre and went on through Sidon to Lake Galilee, going by way of the territory of the Ten Towns. [32]Some people brought him a man who was deaf and could hardly speak, and begged Jesus to place his hand on him. [33]So Jesus took him off alone, away from the crowd, put his fingers in the man's ears, spat, and touched the man's tongue. [34]Then Jesus looked up to heaven, gave a deep groan, and said to the man, *"Ephphatha,"* which means, "Open up!"

[35]At once the man's ears were opened, his tongue was set loose, and he began to talk without any trouble. [36]Then Jesus ordered them all not to speak of it to anyone; but the more he ordered them, the more they told it. [37]And all who heard were completely amazed. "How well he does everything!" they exclaimed. "He even makes the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak!"

Jesus Feeds the Four Thousand

(Also Matt. 15.32–39)

8 Not long afterward, another large crowd came together. When they had nothing left to eat, Jesus called the disciples to him and said, [2]"I feel sorry for these people, because they have been with me for three days and now have nothing to eat. [3]If I send them home without feeding them they will faint as they go, because some of them have come a long way."

Everybody ate and had enough

[4]His disciples asked him, "Where in this desert can anyone find enough food to feed all these people?"

[5]"How much bread do you have?" Jesus asked.

"Seven loaves," they answered.

[6]He ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground. Then he took the seven loaves, gave thanks to God, broke them, and gave them to his disciples to distribute to the crowd; and the disciples did so. [7]They also had a few small fish. Jesus gave thanks for these and told the disciples to distribute them too. [8]Everybody ate and had enough—there were about four thousand people. [9]Then the disciples took up seven baskets full of pieces left over. Jesus sent the people away, [10]and at once got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha.

The Pharisees Ask for a Miracle

(Also Matt. 16.1–4)

[11]Some Pharisees came to Jesus and started to argue with him. They wanted to trap him, so they asked him to perform a miracle to show God's approval. [12]Jesus gave a deep groan and said, "Why do the people of this

day ask for a miracle? No, I tell you! No such proof will be given this people!"

[13]He left them, got back into the boat, and started across to the other side of the lake.

The Yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod

(Also Matt. 16.5-12)

[14]The disciples had forgotten to bring any extra bread, and had only one loaf with them in the boat. [15]"Look out," Jesus warned them, "and be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod."

[16]They started discussing among themselves, "He says this because we don't have any bread."

[17]Jesus knew what they were saying, so he asked them, "Why are you discussing about not having any bread? Don't you know or understand yet? Are your minds so dull? [18]You have eyes—can't you see? You have ears—can't you hear? Don't you remember [19]when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand people? How many baskets full of leftover pieces did you take up?"

"Twelve," they answered.

[20]"And when I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand people," asked Jesus, "how many baskets full of leftover pieces did you take up?"

"Seven," they answered.

[21]"And you still don't understand?" he asked them.

Jesus Heals a Blind Man at Bethsaida

[22]They came to Bethsaida, where some people brought a blind man to Jesus and begged him to touch him. [23]Jesus took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village. After spitting on the man's eyes, Jesus placed his hands on him and asked him, "Can you see anything?"

[24]The man looked up and said, "Yes, I can see people, but they look like trees walking around."

[25]Jesus again placed his hands on the man's eyes. This time the man looked hard, his eyesight came back, and he saw everything clearly. [26]Jesus then sent him home with the order, "Don't go back into the village."

Peter's Declaration about Jesus

(Also Matt. 16.13–20; Luke 9.18–21)

27 Then Jesus and his disciples went away to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "Tell me, who do people say I am?"

28 "Some say that you are John the Baptist," they answered; "others say that you are Elijah, while others say that you are one of the prophets."

29 "What about you?" he asked them. "Who do you say I am?"

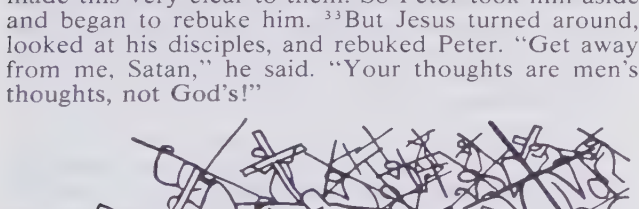
Peter answered, "You are the Messiah."

30 Then Jesus ordered them, "Do not tell anyone about me."

Jesus Speaks about His Suffering and Death

(Also Matt. 16.21–28; Luke 9.22–27)

31 Then Jesus began to teach his disciples: "The Son of Man must suffer much, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law. He will be put to death, and after three days he will rise to life." 32 He made this very clear to them. So Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33 But Jesus turned around, looked at his disciples, and rebuked Peter. "Get away from me, Satan," he said. "Your thoughts are men's thoughts, not God's!"



Carry his cross, and follow me

34 Then Jesus called the crowd and his disciples to him. "If anyone wants to come with me," he told them, "he must forget himself, carry his cross, and follow me. 35 For whoever wants to save his own life will lose it; but

whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. [36]Does a man gain anything if he wins the whole world but loses his life? Of course not! [37]There is nothing a man can give to regain his life. [38]If, then, a man is ashamed of me and of my teaching in this godless and wicked day, then the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

9 And he went on to say, "Remember this! There are some here who will not die until they have seen the Kingdom of God come with power."

The Transfiguration

(Also Matt. 17.1–13; Luke 9.28–36) .

[2]Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. As they looked on, a change came over him, [3]and his clothes became shining white, whiter than anyone in the world could wash them. [4]Then the three disciples saw Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus. [5]Peter spoke up and said to Jesus, "Teacher, it is a good thing that we are here. We will make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." [6]He and the others were so frightened that he did not know what to say.

[7]A cloud appeared and covered them with its shadow, and a voice came from the cloud, "This is my own dear Son—listen to him!" [8]They took a quick look around but did not see anyone else; only Jesus was with them.

[9]As they came down the mountain Jesus ordered them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has risen from death."

[10]They obeyed his order, but among themselves they started discussing the matter, "What does this 'rising from death' mean?" [11]And they asked Jesus, "Why do the teachers of the Law say that Elijah has to come first?"

[12]His answer was, "Elijah does indeed come first to get everything ready. Yet why do the Scriptures say that the Son of Man will suffer much and be rejected? [13]I tell you, however, that Elijah has already come, and that people did to him what they wanted to, just as the Scriptures say about him."

Jesus Heals a Boy with an Evil Spirit
(Also Matt. 17.14–21; Luke 9.37–43a)

[14]When they joined the rest of the disciples, they saw a large crowd there. Some teachers of the Law were arguing with the disciples. [15]As soon as the people saw Jesus, they were greatly surprised and ran to him and greeted him. [16]Jesus asked his disciples, "What are you arguing with them about?"

[17]A man in the crowd answered, "Teacher, I brought my son to you, because he has an evil spirit in him and cannot talk. [18]Whenever the spirit attacks him, it throws him to the ground, and he foams at the mouth, grits his teeth, and becomes stiff all over. I asked your disciples to drive the spirit out, but they could not."

[19]Jesus said to them, "How unbelieving you people are! How long must I stay with you? How long do I have to put up with you? Bring the boy to me!" [20]They brought him to Jesus.

As soon as the spirit saw Jesus, it threw the boy into a fit, so that he fell on the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth. [21]"How long has he been like this?" Jesus asked the father.

"Ever since he was a child," he replied. [22]"Many times it has tried to kill him by throwing him in the fire and in the water. Have pity on us and help us, if you possibly can!"

[23]"Yes," said Jesus, "if *you* can! Everything is possible for the person who has faith."

[24]The father at once cried out, "I do have faith, but not enough. Help me have more!"

[25]Jesus noticed that the crowd was closing in on them, so he gave a command to the evil spirit. "Deaf and dumb spirit," he said, "I order you to come out of the boy and never go into him again!"

[26]The spirit screamed, threw the boy into a bad fit, and came out. The boy looked like a corpse, so that everyone said, "He is dead!" [27]But Jesus took the boy by the hand and helped him rise, and he stood up.

[28]After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, "Why couldn't we drive the spirit out?"

[29]"Only prayer can drive this kind out," answered Jesus; "nothing else can."

Jesus Speaks Again about His Death

(Also Matt. 17.22–23; Luke 9.43b–45)

30 They left that place and went on through Galilee.
Jesus did not want anyone to know where he was, 31 because he was teaching his disciples, "The Son of Man will be handed over to men who will kill him; three days later, however, he will rise to life."

32 They did not understand what this teaching meant, but they were afraid to ask him.

Who Is the Greatest?

(Also Matt. 18.1–5; Luke 9.46–48)

33 They came to Capernaum, and after going indoors Jesus asked his disciples, "What were you arguing about on the road?"

34 But they would not answer him, because on the road they had been arguing among themselves about who was the greatest. 35 Jesus sat down, called the twelve disciples, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must place himself last of all and be the servant of all." 36 He took a child and made him stand in front of them. Then he put his arms around him and said to them, 37 "Whoever in my name welcomes one of these children, welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me, welcomes not only me but also the one who sent me."

Who Is not against Us Is for Us

(Also Luke 9.49–50)

38 John said to him, "Teacher, we saw a man who was driving out demons in your name, and we told him to stop, because he doesn't belong to our group."

39 "Do not try to stop him," Jesus told them, "because no one who performs a miracle in my name will be able soon after to say bad things about me. 40 For whoever is not against us is for us. 41 Remember this! Anyone who gives you a drink of water because you belong to Christ will certainly receive his reward."

Temptations to Sin

(Also Matt. 18.6–9; Luke 17.1–2)

42 "If anyone should cause one of these little ones to turn away from his faith in me, it would be better for that man to have a large millstone tied around his neck and

be thrown into the sea. [43]So if your hand makes you turn away, cut it off! It is better for you to enter life without a hand than to keep both hands and go off to hell, to the fire that never goes out. [[44]There 'their worms never die, and the fire is never put out.'] [45]And if your foot makes you turn away, cut it off! It is better for you to enter life without a foot than to keep both feet and be thrown into hell. [[46]There 'their worms never die, and the fire is never put out.'] [47]And if your eye makes you turn away, take it out! It is better for you to enter the Kingdom of God with only one eye, than to keep both eyes and be thrown into hell. [48]There 'their worms never die, and the fire is never put out.'

[49]"For everyone will be salted with fire. [50]Salt is good; but if it loses its saltness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

Jesus Teaches about Divorce

(Also Matt. 19.1–12; Luke 16.18)

10 Then Jesus left that place, went to the region of Judea, and crossed the Jordan River. Crowds came flocking to him again and he taught them, as he always did.

[2]Some Pharisees came to him and tried to trap him. "Tell us," they asked, "does our Law allow a man to divorce his wife?"

[3]Jesus answered with a question, "What commandment did Moses give you?"

[4]Their answer was, "Moses gave permission for a man to write a divorce notice and send his wife away."

[5]Jesus said to them, "Moses wrote this commandment for you because you are so hard to teach. [6]But in the beginning, at the time of creation, it was said, 'God made them male and female. [7]And for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife, [8]and the two will become one.' So they are no longer two, but one. [9]Man must not separate, then, what God has joined together."

[10]When they went back into the house, the disciples asked Jesus about this matter. [11]He said to them, "The man who divorces his wife and marries another woman

commits adultery against his wife; [12]in the same way, the woman who divorces her husband and marries another man commits adultery."

Jesus Blesses Little Children

(Also Matt. 19.13–15; Luke 18.15–17)

[13]Some people brought children to Jesus for him to touch them, but the disciples scolded those people. [14]When Jesus noticed it, he was angry and said to his disciples, "Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. [15]Remember this! Whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it." [16]Then he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on each of them, and blessed them.

The Rich Man

(Also Matt. 19.16–30; Luke 18.18–30)

[17]As Jesus was starting again on his way, a man ran up, knelt before him, and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to receive eternal life?"

[18]"Why do you call me good?" Jesus asked him. "No one is good except God alone. [19]You know the commandments: 'Do not murder; do not commit adultery; do not steal; do not lie; do not cheat; honor your father and mother.' "

[20]"Teacher," the man said, "ever since I was young I have obeyed all these commandments."

[21]Jesus looked straight at him with love and said, "You need only one thing. Go and sell all you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven; then come and follow me." [22]When the man heard this, gloom spread over his face and he went away sad, because he was very rich.

[23]Jesus looked around at his disciples and said to them, "How hard it will be for rich people to enter the Kingdom of God!"

[24]The disciples were shocked at these words, but Jesus went on to say, "My children, how hard it is to enter the Kingdom of God! [25]It is much harder for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle."

[26]At this the disciples were completely amazed, and asked one another, "Who, then, can be saved?"
[27]Jesus looked straight at them and answered, "This is impossible for men, but not for God; everything is possible for God."
[28]Then Peter spoke up, "Look, we have left everything and followed you."
[29]"Yes," Jesus said to them, "and I tell you this: anyone who leaves home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me, and for the gospel, [30]will receive much more in this present age. He will receive a hundred times more houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and fields—and persecutions as well; and in the age to come he will receive eternal life.[31]But many who now are first will be last, and many who now are last will be first."

Jesus Speaks a Third Time about His Death

(Also Matt. 20.17–19; Luke 18.31–34)

[32]They were now on the road going up to Jerusalem. Jesus was going ahead of the disciples, who were filled with alarm; the people who followed behind were afraid. Once again Jesus took the twelve disciples aside and spoke of the things that were going to happen to him. [33]"Listen," he told them, "we are going up to Jerusalem where the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the teachers of the Law. They will condemn him to death and then hand him over to the Gentiles. [34]These will make fun of him, spit on him, whip him, and kill him. And after three days he will rise to life."

The Request of James and John

(Also Matt. 20.20–28)

[35]Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus. "Teacher," they said, "there is something we want you to do for us."
[36]"What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked them.
[37]They answered, "When you sit on your throne in the glorious Kingdom, we want you to let us sit with you, one at your right and one at your left."
[38]Jesus said to them, "You don't know what you are

asking for. Can you drink the cup that I must drink? Can you be baptized in the way I must be baptized?"

[39]"We can," they answered.

Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup I must drink and be baptized in the way I must be baptized. [40]But I do not have the right to choose who will sit at my right and my left. It is God who will give these places to those for whom he has prepared them."

[41]When the other ten disciples heard about this they became angry with James and John. [42]So Jesus called them all together to him and said, "You know that the men who are considered rulers have power over the people, and their leaders rule over them. [43]This, however, is not the way it is among you. If one of you wants to be great, he must be the servant of the rest; [44]and if one of you wants to be first, he must be the slave of all. [45]For even the Son of Man did not come to be served; he came to serve and to give his life to redeem many people."

Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus

(Also Matt. 20.29–34; Luke 18.35–43)

[46]They came to Jericho. As Jesus was leaving with his disciples and a large crowd, a blind man named Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the road, begging.

Son of David! Have mercy on me!

47 When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began
to shout, "Jesus! Son of David! Have mercy on me!"
48 Many scolded him and told him to be quiet. But he
shouted even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy
on me!"
49 Jesus stopped and said, "Call him."
So they called the blind man. "Cheer up!" they said.
"Get up, he is calling you."
50 He threw off his cloak, jumped up, and came to
Jesus.
51 "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked
him.
"Teacher," the blind man answered, "I want to see
again."
52 "Go," Jesus told him, "your faith has made you
well."
At once he was able to see, and followed Jesus on the
road.

The Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem

(Also Matt. 21.1–11; Luke 19.28–40; John 12.12–19)

11 As they came near Jerusalem, at the towns of
Bethphage and Bethany they came to the Mount
of Olives. Jesus sent two of his disciples on ahead 2 with
these instructions, "Go to the village there ahead of you.
As soon as you get there you will find a colt tied up that
has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. 3 And
if someone asks you, 'Why are you doing that?' tell him,
'The Master needs it and will send it back here at
once.' "
4 So they went and found a colt out in the street, tied
to the door of a house. As they were untying it, 5 some
of the bystanders asked them, "What are you doing,
untying that colt?"
6 They answered just as Jesus had told them, so the
men let them go. 7 They brought the colt to Jesus,
threw their cloaks over the animal, and Jesus got on.
8 Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while
others cut branches in the fields and spread them on
the road. 9 The people who were in front and those who
followed behind began to shout, "Praise God! God
bless him who comes in the name of the Lord! 10 God

bless the coming kingdom of our father David! Praise be to God!"

[11]Jesus entered Jerusalem, went into the temple, and looked around at everything. But since it was already late in the day, he went out to Bethany with the twelve disciples.

Jesus Curses the Fig Tree

(Also Matt. 21.18–19)

[12]The next day, as they were coming back from Bethany, Jesus was hungry. [13]He saw in the distance a fig tree covered with leaves, so he went to it to see if he could find any figs on it; but when he came to it he found only leaves, because it was not the right time for figs. [14]Jesus said to the fig tree, "No one shall ever eat figs from you again!"

And his disciples heard him.

A hideout for thieves!

Jesus Goes to the Temple

(Also Matt. 21.12–17; Luke 19.45–48; John 2.13–22)

15 When they arrived in Jerusalem, Jesus went to the
temple and began to drive out all those who bought and
sold in the temple. He overturned the tables of the
moneychangers and the stools of those who sold pi-
geons, 16 and would not let anyone carry anything
through the temple courts. 17 He then taught the people,
"It is written in the Scriptures that God said, 'My house
will be called a house of prayer for all peoples.' But you
have turned it into a hideout for thieves!"

18 The chief priests and the teachers of the Law heard
of this, so they began looking for some way to kill Jesus.
They were afraid of him, because the whole crowd was
amazed at his teaching.

19 When evening came, Jesus and his disciples left the
city.

The Lesson from the Fig Tree

(Also Matt. 21.20–22)

20 Early next morning, as they walked along the road,
they saw the fig tree. It was dead all the way down to
its roots. 21 Peter remembered what had happened and
said to Jesus, "Look, Teacher, the fig tree you cursed has
died!"

22 Jesus answered them, "Remember this! If you
have faith in God, 23 you can say to this hill, 'Get up
and throw yourself in the sea.' If you do not doubt in
your heart, but believe that what you say will happen,
it will be done for you. 24 For this reason I tell you:
When you pray and ask for something, believe that
you have received it, and you will be given whatever
you ask for. 25 And when you stand praying, forgive
anything you may have against anyone, so that your
Father in heaven will forgive your sins. [26 If you do
not forgive others, neither will your Father in heaven
forgive your sins.]"

The Question about Jesus' Authority

(Also Matt. 21.23–27; Luke 20.1–8)

27 They came back to Jerusalem. As Jesus was walking
in the temple, the chief priests, the teachers of the Law,

and the elders came to him [28]and asked him, "What right do you have to do these things? Who gave you the right to do them?"

[29]Jesus answered them, "I will ask you just one question, and if you give me an answer I will tell you what right I have to do these things. [30]Tell me, where did John's right to baptize come from: from God or from men?"

[31]They started to argue among themselves, "What shall we say? If we answer, 'From God,' he will say, 'Why, then, did you not believe John?' [32]But if we say, 'From men . . . ' "(They were afraid of the people, because everyone was convinced that John had been a prophet.) [33]So their answer to Jesus was, "We don't know."

Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you, then, by what right I do these things."

The Parable of the Tenants in the Vineyard

(Also Matt. 21.33–46; Luke 20.9–19)

12 Then Jesus spoke to them in parables, "There was a man who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a hole for the winepress, and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to tenants and left home on a trip. [2]When the time came for gathering the grapes, he sent a slave to the tenants to receive from them his share of the harvest. [3]The tenants grabbed the slave, beat him, and sent him back without a thing. [4]Then the owner sent another slave; the tenants beat him over the head and treated him shamefully. [5]The owner sent another slave, and they killed him; and they treated many others the same way, beating some and killing others. [6]The only one left to send was the man's own dear son. Last of all, then, he sent his son to the tenants. 'I am sure they will respect my son,' he said. [7]But those tenants said to one another, 'This is the owner's son. Come on, let us kill him, and his property will be ours!' [8]So they took the son and killed him, and threw his body out of the vineyard.

[9]"What, then, will the owner of the vineyard do?" asked Jesus. "He will come and kill those men and

turn over the vineyard to other tenants. [10]Surely you have read this scripture?

'The very stone which the builders rejected
turned out to be the most important stone.
[11] This was done by the Lord;
how wonderful it is!' "

[12]The Jewish leaders tried to arrest Jesus, because they knew that he had told this parable against them. They were afraid of the crowd, however, so they left him and went away.

The Question about Paying Taxes

(Also Matt. 22.15–22; Luke 20.20–26)

[13]Some Pharisees and some members of Herod's party were sent to Jesus to trap him with questions. [14]They came to him and said, "Teacher, we know that you tell the truth, without worrying about what people think. You pay no attention to a man's status, but teach the truth about God's will for man. Tell us, is it against our Law to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor? Should we pay them, or not?"

[15]But Jesus saw through their trick and answered, "Why are you trying to trap me? Bring a silver coin, and let me see it."

[16]They brought him one and he asked, "Whose face and name are these?"

"The Emperor's," they answered.

[17]So Jesus said, "Well, then, pay to the Emperor what belongs to him, and pay to God what belongs to God."

And they were filled with wonder at him.

The Question about Rising from Death

(Also Matt. 22.23–33; Luke 20.27–40)

[18]Some Sadducees came to Jesus. (They are the ones who say that people will not rise from death.) [19]"Teacher," they said, "Moses wrote this law for us: 'If a man dies and leaves a wife, but no children, that man's brother must marry the widow so they can have children for the dead man.' [20]Once there were seven brothers; the oldest got married, and died without having children.

[21]Then the second one married the woman, and he died without having children. The same thing happened to the third brother, [22]and then to the rest: all seven brothers married the woman and died without having children. Last of all, the woman died. [23]Now, when all the dead rise to life on the day of resurrection, whose wife will she be? All seven of them had married her."

[24]Jesus answered them, "How wrong you are! And do you know why? It is because you don't know the Scriptures or God's power. [25]For when the dead rise to life they will be like the angels in heaven, and men and women will not marry. [26]Now, as to the dead being raised: haven't you ever read in the book of Moses the passage about the burning bush? There it is written that God said to Moses, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' [27]That means that he is the God of the living, not of the dead. You are completely wrong!"

The Great Commandment

(Also Matt. 22.34–40; Luke 10.25–28)

[28]A teacher of the Law was there who heard the discussion. He saw that Jesus had given the Sadducees a good answer, so he came to him with a question, "Which commandment is the most important of all?"

[29]"This is the most important one," said Jesus. "'Listen, Israel! The Lord our God is the only Lord. [30]You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' [31]The second most important commandment is this: 'You must love your fellow-man as yourself.' There is no other commandment more important than these two."

[32]The teacher of the Law said to Jesus, "Well done, Teacher! It is true, as you say, that only the Lord is God, and that there is no other god but he. [33]And man must love God with all his heart, and with all his mind, and with all his strength; and he must love his fellow-man as himself. It is more important to obey these two commandments than to offer animals and other sacrifices to God on the altar."

[34]Jesus noticed how wise his answer was, and so he told him, "You are not far from the Kingdom of God."

After this nobody dared to ask Jesus any more questions.

The Question about the Messiah

(Also Matt. 22.41–46; Luke 20.41–44)

[35]As Jesus was teaching in the temple he asked the question, "How can the teachers of the Law say that the Messiah will be the descendant of David? [36]The Holy Spirit inspired David to say:

> 'The Lord said to my Lord:
> Sit here at my right side,
> until I put your enemies under your feet.'

[37]David himself called him 'Lord'; how, then, can the Messiah be David's descendant?"

Jesus Warns against the Teachers of the Law

(Also Matt. 23.1–36; Luke 20.45–47)

The large crowd heard Jesus gladly. [38]As he taught them he said, "Watch out for the teachers of the Law, who like to walk around in their long robes and be greeted with respect in the market place; [39]who choose the reserved seats in the synagogues and the best places at feasts. [40]They take advantage of widows and rob them of their homes, and then make a show of saying long prayers. Their punishment will be all the worse!"

The Widow's Offering

(Also Luke 21.1–4)

[41]As Jesus sat near the temple treasury he watched the people as they dropped in their money. Many rich men dropped in much money; [42]then a poor widow came along and dropped in two little copper coins, worth about a penny. [43]He called his disciples together and said to them, "I tell you that this poor widow put more in the offering box than all the others. [44]For the others put in what they had to spare of their riches; but she, poor as she is, put in all she had—she gave all she had to live on."

A poor widow came along

Jesus Speaks of the Destruction of the Temple

(Also Matt. 24.1–2; Luke 21.5–6)

13 As Jesus was leaving the temple, one of his disciples said, "Look, Teacher! What wonderful stones and buildings!"

[2]Jesus answered, "You see these great buildings? Not a single stone here will be left in its place; every one of them will be thrown down."

Troubles and Persecutions

(Also Matt. 24.3–14; Luke 21.7–19)

[3]Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, across from the temple, when Peter, James, John, and Andrew came to him in private. [4]"Tell us when this will be," they said, "and tell us what will happen to show that the time has come for all these things to take place."

[5]Jesus said to them, "Watch out, and don't let anyone

fool you. 6Many men will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and fool many people. 7And don't be troubled when you hear the noise of battles close by and news of battles far away. Such things must happen, but they do not mean that the end has come. 8Countries will fight each other, kingdoms will attack one another. There will be earthquakes everywhere, and there will be famines. These things are like the first pains of childbirth.

9"You yourselves must watch out. You will be arrested and taken to court. You will be beaten in the synagogues; you will stand before rulers and kings for my sake, to tell them the Good News. 10The gospel must first be preached to all peoples. 11And when they arrest you and take you to court, do not worry ahead of time about what you are going to say; when the time comes, say whatever is given to you then. For the words you speak will not be yours; they will come from the Holy Spirit. 12Men will hand over their own brothers to be put to death, and fathers will do the same to their children; children will turn against their parents and have them put to death. 13Everyone will hate you because of me. But whoever holds out to the end will be saved."

The Awful Horror

(Also Matt. 24.15–28; Luke 21.20–24)

14"You will see 'The Awful Horror' standing in the place where he should not be." (Note to the reader: understand what this means!) "Then those who are in Judea must run away to the hills. 15The man who is on the roof of his house must not lose time by going down into the house to get anything to take with him. 16The man who is in the field must not go back to the house for his cloak. 17How terrible it will be in those days for women who are pregnant, and for mothers who have little babies! 18Pray to God that these things will not happen in wintertime! 19For the trouble of those days will be far worse than any the world has ever known, from the very beginning when God created the world until the present time. Nor will there ever again be anything like it. 20But the Lord has reduced the number of those days; if he had not, nobody would survive. For the sake of his chosen people, however, he has reduced those days.

21"Then, if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the
Messiah!' or, 'Look, there he is!'—do not believe him.
22For false Messiahs and false prophets will appear.
They will perform signs and wonders for the purpose of
deceiving God's chosen people, if possible. 23Be on your
guard! I have told you everything ahead of time."

The Coming of the Son of Man

(Also Matt. 24.29–31; Luke 21.25–28)

24"In the days after that time of trouble the sun will
grow dark, the moon will no longer shine, 25the stars will
fall from heaven, and the powers in space will be driven
from their courses. 26Then the Son of Man will appear,
coming in the clouds with great power and glory. 27He
will send out the angels to the four corners of the earth
and gather God's chosen people from one end of the
world to the other."

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

(Also Matt. 24.32–35; Luke 21.29–33)

28"Let the fig tree teach you a lesson. When its
branches become green and tender, and it starts putting
out leaves, you know that summer is near. 29In the same
way, when you see these things happening, you will
know that the time is near, ready to begin. 30Remember
this! All these things will happen before the people now
living have all died. 31Heaven and earth will pass away;
my words will never pass away."

No One Knows the Day or Hour

(Also Matt. 24.36–44)

32"No one knows, however, when that day or hour
will come—neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son;
only the Father knows. 33Be on watch, be alert, for you
do not know when the time will be. 34It will be like a
man who goes away from home on a trip and leaves his
servants in charge, each one with his own work to do;
and he tells the doorkeeper to keep watch. 35Watch,
then, because you do not know when the master of the
house is coming—it might be in the evening, or at mid-
night, or before dawn, or at sunrise. 36If he comes sud-
denly, he must not find you asleep. 37What I say to you,
then, I say to all: Watch!"

The Plot against Jesus

(Also Matt. 26.1–5; Luke 22.1–2; John 11.45–53)

14 It was now two days before the Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the teachers of the Law were looking for a way to arrest Jesus secretly and put him to death. 2"We must not do it during the feast," they said, "or the people might riot."

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

(Also Matt. 26.6–13; John 12.1–8)

3Jesus was in the house of Simon the leper, in Bethany; while he was eating, a woman came in with an alabaster jar full of a very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on Jesus' head. 4Some of the people there became angry, and said to each other, "What was the use of wasting the perfume? 5It could have been sold for more than three hundred dollars, and the money given to the poor!" And they criticized her harshly.

6But Jesus said, "Leave her alone! Why are you bothering her? She has done a fine and beautiful thing for me. 7You will always have poor people with you, and any time you want to you can help them. But I shall not be with you always. 8She did what she could; she poured perfume on my body to prepare it ahead of time for burial. 9Now, remember this! Wherever the gospel is preached, all over the world, what she has done will be told in memory of her."

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

(Also Matt. 26.14–16; Luke 22.3–6)

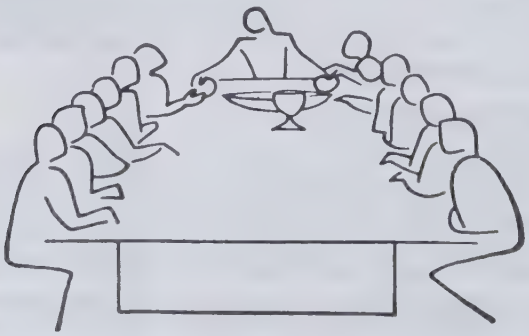
10Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve disciples, went off to the chief priests in order to hand Jesus over to them. 11They were greatly pleased to hear what he had to say, and promised to give him money. So Judas started looking for a good chance to betray Jesus.

Jesus Eats the Passover Meal with His Disciples

(Also Matt. 26.17–25; Luke 22.7–14, 21–23; John 13.21–30)

12On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the day the lambs for the Passover meal were killed,

Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go
and get your Passover meal ready?"
13Then Jesus sent two of them out with these in-
structions: "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar
of water will meet you. Follow him 14to the house he
enters, and say to the owner of the house: 'The
Teacher says, Where is my room where my disciples
and I will eat the Passover meal?' 15Then he will show
you a large upstairs room, fixed up and furnished,
where you will get everything ready for us."
16The disciples left, went to the city, and found ev-
erything just as Jesus had told them; and they prepared
the Passover meal.
17When it was evening, Jesus came with the twelve
disciples. 18While they were at the table eating, Jesus
said, "I tell you this: one of you will betray me one
who is eating with me."
19The disciples were upset and began to ask him,
one after the other, "Surely you don't mean me, do
you?"
20Jesus answered, "It will be one of you twelve, one
who dips his bread in the dish with me. 21The Son of
Man will die as the Scriptures say he will; but how
terrible for that man who will betray the Son of Man!
It would have been better for that man if he had never
been born!"



This is my body

The Lord's Supper

(Also Matt. 26.26–30; Luke 22.15–20; 1 Cor. 11.23–25)

22While they were eating, Jesus took the bread, gave
a prayer of thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples.
"Take it," he said, "this is my body."
23Then he took the cup, gave thanks to God, and
handed it to them; and they all drank from it. 24Jesus
said, "This is my blood which is poured out for many, my
blood which seals God's covenant. 25I tell you, I will
never again drink this wine until the day I drink the new
wine in the Kingdom of God."
26Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount
of Olives.

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

(Also Matt. 26.31–35; Luke 22.31–34; John 13.36–38)

27Jesus said to them, "All of you will run away and
leave me, because the scripture says, 'God will kill the
shepherd and the sheep will all be scattered.' 28But after
I am raised to life I will go to Galilee ahead of you."
29Peter answered, "I will never leave you, even
though all the rest do!"
30"Remember this!" Jesus said to Peter. "Before the
rooster crows two times tonight, you will say three times
that you do not know me."
31Peter answered even more strongly, "I will never
say I do not know you, even if I have to die with you!"
And all the disciples said the same thing.

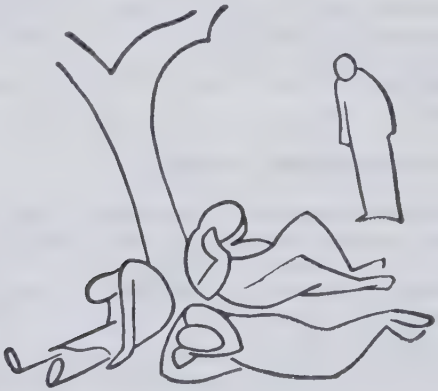
Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

(Also Matt. 26.36–46; Luke 22.39–46)

32They came to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus
said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray."
33Then he took Peter, James, and John with him.
Distress and anguish came over him, 34and he said to
them, "The sorrow in my heart is so great that it almost
crushes me. Stay here and watch."
35He went a little farther on, threw himself on the
ground, and prayed that, if possible, he might not have
to go through the hour of suffering. 36"Father!" he
prayed, "my Father! All things are possible for you.

Take this cup away from me. But not what I want, but what you want."

[37]Then he returned and found the three disciples asleep, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Weren't you able to stay awake for one hour?" [38]And he said to them, "Keep watch, and pray that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."



Weren't you able to stay awake for one hour?

[39]He went away once more and prayed, saying the same words. [40]Then he came back to the disciples and found them asleep; they could not keep their eyes open. And they did not know what to say to him.

[41]When he came back the third time, he said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come! Look, the Son of Man is now handed over to the power of sinful men. [42]Get up, let us go. Look, here is the man who is betraying me!"

The Arrest of Jesus

(Also Matt. 26.47–56; Luke 22.47–53; John 18.3–12)

[43]Jesus was still speaking when Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived. With him was a crowd carrying swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests, the teachers of the Law, and the elders. [44]The traitor had given the

So they arrested Jesus and held him tight

crowd a signal: "The man I kiss is the one you want. Arrest him and take him away under guard."

45As soon as Judas arrived he went up to Jesus and said, "Teacher!" and kissed him. 46So they arrested Jesus and held him tight. 47But one of those standing by drew his sword and struck at the High Priest's slave, cutting off his ear. 48Then Jesus spoke up and said to them, "Did you have to come with swords and clubs to capture me, as though I were an outlaw? 49Day after day I was with you teaching in the temple, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must come true."

50Then all the disciples left him and ran away.

51A certain young man, dressed only in a linen cloth, was following Jesus. They tried to arrest him, 52but he ran away naked, leaving the linen cloth behind.

Jesus before the Council

(Also Matt. 26.57–68; Luke 22.54–55, 63–71; John 18.13–14, 19–24)

53Then they took Jesus to the High Priest's house, where all the chief priests, the elders, and the teachers of the Law were gathering. 54Peter followed from a distance and went into the courtyard of the High Priest's house. There he sat down with the guards, keeping himself warm by the fire. 55The chief priests and the whole Council tried to find some evidence against Jesus, in

order to put him to death; but they could not find any.
56 Many witnesses told lies against Jesus, but their stories
did not agree.
57 Then some men stood up and told this lie against
Jesus, 58 "We heard him say, 'I will tear down this
temple which men made, and after three days I will
build one that is not made by men.'" 59 Not even they,
however, could make their stories agree.
60 The High Priest stood up in front of them all and
questioned Jesus, "Have you no answer to the accusa-
tion they bring against you?"
61 But Jesus kept quiet and would not say a word.
Again the High Priest questioned him, "Are you the
Messiah, the Son of the Blessed God?"
62 "I am," answered Jesus, "and you will all see the
Son of Man seated at the right side of the Almighty,
and coming with the clouds of heaven!"
63 The High Priest tore his robes and said, "We don't
need any more witnesses! 64 You heard his wicked
words. What is your decision?"
They all voted against him: he was guilty and
should be put to death.
65 Some of them began to spit on Jesus, and they
blindfolded him and hit him. "Guess who hit you!"
they said. And the guards took him and slapped him.

Peter Denies Jesus

(Also Matt. 26.69–75; Luke 22.56–62; John 18.15–18, 25–27)

66 Peter was still down in the courtyard when one of
the High Priest's servant girls came by. 67 When she saw
Peter warming himself, she looked straight at him and
said, "You, too, were with Jesus of Nazareth."
68 But he denied it. "I don't know ... I don't under-
stand what you are talking about," he answered, and
went out into the passageway; just then a rooster
crowed.
69 The servant girl saw him there and began to repeat
to the bystanders, "He is one of them!" 70 But Peter
denied it again.
A little while later the bystanders accused Peter
again, "You can't deny that you are one of them, be-
cause you, too, are from Galilee."
71 Then Peter made a vow: "May God punish me if I

And he broke down and cried

am not telling the truth! I do not know the man you are talking about!"

[72]Just then a rooster crowed a second time, and Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows two times you will say three times that you do not know me." And he broke down and cried.

Jesus before Pilate

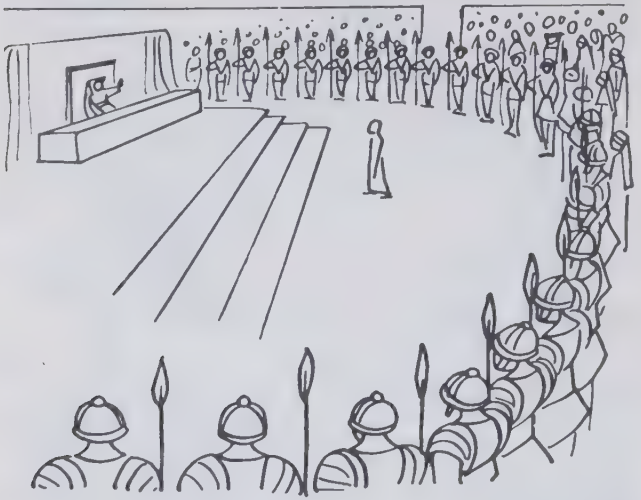
(Also Matt. 27.1–2, 11–14; Luke 23.1–5; John 18.28–38)

15 Early in the morning the chief priests met hurriedly with the elders, the teachers of the Law, and the whole Council, and made their plans. They put Jesus in chains, took him away, and handed him over to Pilate. [2]Pilate questioned him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"

Jesus answered, "So you say."

[3]The chief priests accused Jesus of many things, [4]so Pilate questioned him again, "Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they accuse you of!"

[5]Again Jesus refused to say a word, and Pilate was filled with surprise.



Are you the king of the Jews?

Jesus Sentenced to Death

(Also Matt. 27.15–26; Luke 23.13–25; John 18.39—19.16)

6At every Passover Feast Pilate would set free any
prisoner the people asked for. 7At that time a man
named Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had
committed murder in the riot. 8When the crowd gath-
ered and began to ask Pilate for the usual favor, 9he
asked them, "Do you want me to set free for you the
king of the Jews?" 10He knew very well that the chief
priests had handed Jesus over to him because they were
jealous.

11But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to ask, in-
stead, for Pilate to set Barabbas free for them. 12Pilate
spoke again to the crowd, "What, then, do you want me
to do with the one you call the king of the Jews?"

13They shouted back, "Nail him to the cross!"

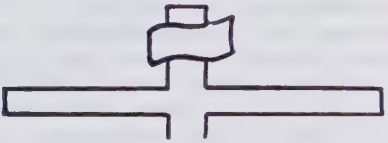
14"But what crime has he committed?" Pilate asked.
They shouted all the louder, "Nail him to the cross!"

15 Pilate wanted to please the crowd, so he set Barabbas free for them. Then he had Jesus whipped and handed him over to be nailed to the cross.

The Soldiers Make Fun of Jesus

(Also Matt. 27.27–31; John 19.2–3)

16 The soldiers took Jesus inside the courtyard (that is, of the governor's palace) and called together the rest of the company. 17 They put a purple robe on Jesus, made a crown out of thorny branches, and put it on his head. 18 Then they began to salute him: "Long live the King of the Jews!" 19 They beat him over the head with a stick, spat on him, fell on their knees, and bowed down to him. 20 When they had finished making fun of him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes back on him. Then they led him out to nail him to the cross.



Jesus Nailed to the Cross

(Also Matt. 27.32–44; Luke 23.26–43; John 19.17–27)

21 On the way they met a man named Simon, who was coming into the city from the country, and they forced

And divided his clothes among themselves

him to carry Jesus' cross. (This was Simon from Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus.) [22]They brought Jesus to a place called Golgotha, which means "The Place of the Skull." [23]There they tried to give him wine mixed with a drug called myrrh, but Jesus would not drink it. [24]So they nailed him to the cross and divided his clothes among themselves, throwing dice to see who would get which piece of clothing. [25]It was nine o'clock in the morning when they nailed him to the cross. [26]The notice of the accusation against him was written, "The King of the Jews." [27]They also nailed two bandits to crosses with Jesus, one on his right and the other on his left. [[28]In this way the scripture came true which says, "He was included with criminals."]

[29]People passing by shook their heads and hurled insults at Jesus: "Aha! You were going to tear down the temple and build it up in three days! [30]Now come down from the cross and save yourself!"

[31]In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the Law made fun of Jesus, saying to each other, "He saved others, but he cannot save himself! [32]Let us see the Messiah, the king of Israel, come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him!"

And the two who were crucified with Jesus insulted him also.

The Death of Jesus

(Also Matt. 27.45–56; Luke 23.44–49; John 19.28–30)

[33]At noon the whole country was covered with darkness, which lasted for three hours. [34]At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud shout, *"Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?"* which means, "My God, my God, why did you abandon me?"

[35]Some of the people who were there heard him and said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah!" [36]One of them ran up with a sponge, soaked it in cheap wine, and put it on the end of a stick. Then he held it up to Jesus' lips and said, "Wait! Let us see if Elijah is coming to bring him down from the cross!"

[37]With a loud cry Jesus died.

[38]The curtain hanging in the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. [39]The army officer, who was

standing there in front of the cross, saw how Jesus had cried out and died. "This man was really the Son of God!" he said.

40 Some women were there, looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of the younger James and of Joses, and Salome. 41 They had followed Jesus while he was in Galilee and helped him. Many other women were there also, who had come to Jerusalem with him.

The Burial of Jesus

(Also Matt. 27.57–61; Luke 23.50–56; John 19.38–42)

42-43 It was getting on toward evening when Joseph of Arimathea arrived. He was a respected member of the Council, who looked for the coming of the Kingdom of God. It was Preparation day (that is, the day before the Sabbath); so Joseph went in bravely to the presence of Pilate and asked him for the body of Jesus. 44 Pilate was surprised to hear that Jesus was already dead. He called the army officer and asked him if Jesus had been dead a long time. 45 After hearing the officer's report, Pilate told Joseph he could have the body. 46 Joseph bought a linen sheet, took the body down, wrapped it in the sheet, and placed it in a grave which had been dug out of the rock. Then he rolled a large stone across the entrance to the grave. 47 Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses were watching, and saw where Jesus was placed.

The Resurrection

(Also Matt. 28.1–8; Luke 24.1–12; John 20.1–10)

16 After the Sabbath day was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices to go and anoint the body of Jesus. 2 Very early on Sunday morning, at sunrise, they went to the grave. 3-4 On the way they said to one another, "Who will roll away for us the stone from the entrance to the grave?" (It was a very large stone.) Then they looked up and saw that the stone had already been rolled back. 5 So they entered the grave, where they saw a young man sitting at the right, wearing a white robe—and they were filled with alarm.

6 "Don't be alarmed," he said. "I know you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was nailed to the cross.

So they went out and ran

He is not here—he has been raised! Look, here is the
place where they placed him. [7]Now go and give this
message to his disciples, including Peter: 'He is going to
Galilee ahead of you; there you will see him, just as he
told you.' "

[8]So they went out and ran from the grave, because
fear and terror were upon them. They said nothing to
anyone, because they were afraid.

AN OLD ENDING TO THE GOSPEL

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

(Also Matt. 28.9–10; John 20.11–18)

[[9]After Jesus rose from death, early on Sunday, he
appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had
driven out seven demons. [10]She went and told it to his
companions. They were mourning and crying; [11]and
when they heard her say that Jesus was alive and that
she had seen him, they did not believe her.

Jesus Appears to Two Disciples

(Also Luke 24.13–35)

[12]After this, Jesus appeared in a different manner to
two of them while they were on their way to the coun-

try. [13]They returned and told it to the others, but they would not believe it.

Jesus Appears to the Eleven

(Also Matt. 28.16–20; Luke 24.36–49; John 20.19–23; Acts 1.6–8)

[14]Last of all, Jesus appeared to the eleven disciples as they were eating. He scolded them, because they did not have faith and because they were too stubborn to believe those who had seen him alive. [15]He said to them, "Go to the whole world and preach the gospel to all mankind. [16]Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned. [17]Believers will be given these signs of power: they will drive out demons in my name; they will speak in strange tongues; [18]if they pick up snakes or drink any poison, they will not be harmed; they will place their hands on the sick, who will get well."

Jesus Is Taken up to Heaven

(Also Luke 24.50–53; Acts 1.9–11)

[19]After the Lord Jesus had talked with them, he was taken up to heaven and sat at the right side of God. [20]The disciples went and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and proved that their preaching was true by giving them the signs of power.]

ANOTHER OLD ENDING

[[9]The women went to Peter and his friends and gave them a brief account of all they had been told. [10]After this, Jesus himself sent out through his disciples, from the east to the west, the sacred and ever-living message of eternal salvation.]

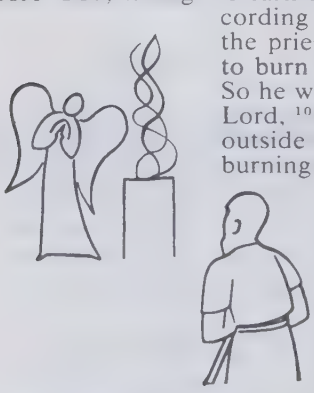
THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Introduction

1 Dear Theophilus:
Many have done their best to write a report of the
things that have taken place among us. [2]They wrote
what we have been told by those who saw these things
from the beginning and proclaimed the message. [3]And
so, your Excellency, because I have carefully studied all
these matters from their beginning, I thought it good to
write an orderly account for you. [4]I do this so that you
will know the full truth of all those matters which you
have been taught.

The Birth of John the Baptist Announced

[5]During the time when Herod was king of the land of
Israel, there was a priest named Zechariah, who be-
longed to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife's name
was Elizabeth; she also belonged to a priestly family.
[6]They both lived good lives in God's sight, and obeyed
fully all the Lord's commandments and rules. [7]They had
no children because Elizabeth could not have any, and
she and Zechariah were both very old.
[8]One day Zechariah was doing his work as a priest
before God, taking his turn in the daily service. [9]Ac-
cording to the custom followed by
the priests, he was chosen by lot
to burn the incense on the altar.
So he went into the temple of the
Lord, [10]while the crowd of people
outside prayed during the hour of
burning the incense. [11]An angel of
the Lord appeared to
him, standing at the right
side of the altar where
the incense was burned.
[12]When Zechariah saw
him he was troubled and
felt afraid. [13]But the an-
gel said to him, "Don't
be afraid, Zechariah!
God has heard your



Don't be afraid, Zechariah!

prayer, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son. You are to name him John. [14]How glad and happy you will be, and how happy many others will be when he is born! [15]He will be a great man in the Lord's sight. He must not drink any wine or strong drink. From his very birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. [16]He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. [17]He will go ahead of him, strong and mighty like the prophet Elijah. He will bring fathers and children together again; he will turn the disobedient people back to the way of thinking of the righteous; he will get the Lord's people ready for him."

[18]Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know if this is so? I am an old man and my wife also is old."

[19]"I am Gabriel," the angel answered. "I stand in the presence of God, who sent me to speak to you and tell you this good news. [20]But you have not believed my message, which will come true at the right time. Because you have not believed you will be unable to speak; you will remain silent until the day my promise to you comes true."

[21]In the meantime the people were waiting for Zechariah, wondering why he was spending such a long time in the temple. [22]When he came out he could not speak to them, and so they knew that he had seen a vision in the temple. Unable to say a word, he made signs to them with his hands.

[23]When his period of service in the temple was over, Zechariah went back home. [24]Some time later his wife Elizabeth became pregnant, and did not leave the house for five months. [25]"Now at last the Lord has helped me in this way," she said. "He has taken away my public disgrace!"

The Birth of Jesus Announced

[26]In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee named Nazareth. [27]He had a message for a girl promised in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was a descendant of King David. The girl's name was Mary. [28]The angel came to her and said, "Peace be with you! The Lord is with you, and has greatly blessed you!"

29 Mary was deeply troubled by the angel's message,
and she wondered what his words meant. 30 The angel
said to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary, because God has
been gracious to you. 31 You will become pregnant and
give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. 32 He
will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High
God. The Lord God will make him a king, as his ances-
tor David was, 33 and he will be the king of the descend-
ants of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end!"
34 Mary said to the angel, "I am a virgin. How, then,
can this be?"
35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come
on you, and God's power will rest upon you. For this
reason the holy child will be called the Son of God.
36 Remember your relative Elizabeth. It is said that she
cannot have children; but she herself is now six
months pregnant, even though she is very old. 37 For
there is not a thing that God cannot do."
38 "I am the Lord's servant," said Mary; "may it hap-
pen to me as you have said." And the angel left her.

Mary Visits Elizabeth

39 Soon afterward Mary got ready and hurried off to
the hill country, to a town in Judea. 40 She went into
Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. 41 When Eliza-
beth heard Mary's greeting, the baby moved within her.
Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, 42 and spoke in
a loud voice, "You are the most blessed of all women,
and blessed is the child you will bear! 43 Why should this
great thing happen to me, that my Lord's mother comes
to visit me? 44 For as soon as I heard your greeting, the
baby within me jumped with gladness. 45 How happy are
you to believe that the Lord's message to you will come
true!"

Mary's Song of Praise

46 Mary said,
"My heart praises the Lord;
47 my soul is glad because of God my Savior,
48 because he has remembered me, his lowly
servant!
From now on all people will call me happy,

49 because of the great things the Mighty
God has done for me.
His name is holy;
50 he shows mercy to those who fear him,
from one generation to another.
51 He stretched out his mighty arm
and scattered the proud with all their
plans.
52 He brought down mighty kings from their
thrones,
and lifted up the lowly.
53 He filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away with empty
hands.
54 He kept the promise he made to our
ancestors,
and came to the help of his servant
Israel;
55 he remembered to show mercy to Abra-
ham
and to all his descendants forever!"
56 Mary stayed about three months with Elizabeth,
and then went back home.

The Birth of John the Baptist

57 The time came for Elizabeth to have her baby, and
she gave birth to a son. 58 Her neighbors and relatives
heard how wonderfully good the Lord had been to her,
and they all rejoiced with her.
59 When the baby was a week old they came to circum-
cise him; they were going to name him Zechariah, his
father's name. 60 But his mother said, "No! His name
will be John."
61 They said to her, "But you don't have any relative
with that name!" 62 Then they made signs to his father,
asking him what name he would like the boy to have.
63 Zechariah asked for a writing pad and wrote, "His
name is John." How surprised they all were! 64 At that
moment Zechariah was able to speak again, and he
started praising God. 65 The neighbors were all filled
with fear, and the news about these things spread
through all the hill country of Judea. 66 Everyone who

heard of it thought about it and asked, "What is this child going to be?" It was plain that the Lord's power was with him.

Zechariah's Prophecy

67 John's father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit, and he spoke God's message,

68 "Let us praise the Lord, the God of Israel!
He came to the help of his people and
set them free.
69 He provided a mighty Savior for us,
who is a descendant of his servant
David.
70 Long ago by means of his holy prophets
he said this:
71 he promised to save us from our ene-
mies,
and from the power of all those who
hate us.
72 He said he would show mercy to our
ancestors,
and remember his sacred covenant.
73-74 He made a solemn promise to our ances-
tor Abraham,
and vowed that he would rescue us
from our enemies,
and allow us to serve him without fear;
75 to be holy and righteous before him,
all the days of our life.

76 "You, my child, will be called a prophet of
the Most High God.
You will go ahead of the Lord
to prepare his road for him;
77 to tell his people that they will be saved,
by having their sins forgiven.
78 Our God is merciful and tender.
He will cause the bright dawn of salva-
tion to rise on us,
79 and shine from heaven on all those
who live in the dark shadow of
death,
to guide our steps into the path of
peace."

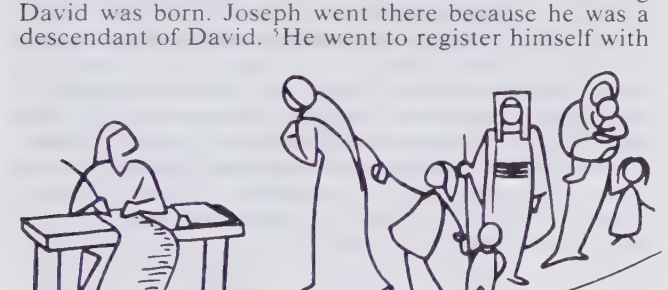
[80]The child grew and developed in body and spirit. He lived in the desert until the day when he would appear publicly to the people of Israel.

The Birth of Jesus

(Also Matt. 1.18–25)

2 At that time Emperor Augustus sent out an order for all the citizens of the Empire to register themselves for the census. [2]When this first census took place, Quirinius was the governor of Syria. [3]Everyone, then, went to register himself, each to his own town.

[4]Joseph went from the town of Nazareth, in Galilee, to Judea, to the town named Bethlehem, where King David was born. Joseph went there because he was a descendant of David. [5]He went to register himself with



Everyone, then, went to register himself

Mary, who was promised in marriage to him. She was pregnant, [6]and while they were in Bethlehem, the time came for her to have her baby. [7]She gave birth to her first son, wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a manger—there was no room for them to stay in the inn.

The Shepherds and the Angels

[8]There were some shepherds in that part of the country who were spending the night in the fields, taking care of their flocks. [9]An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone over them. They were terribly afraid, [10]but the angel said to them, "Don't be

afraid! I am here with good news for you, which will
bring great joy to all the people. 11This very day in
David's town your Savior was born—Christ the Lord!
12What will prove it to you is this: you will find a baby
wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."
13Suddenly a great army of heaven's angels appeared
with the angel, singing praises to God,
14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and peace on earth to those with
whom he is pleased!"
15When the angels went away from them back into
heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go
to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened,
that the Lord has told us."
16So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph,
and saw the baby lying in the manger. 17When the
shepherds saw him they told them what the angel had
said about this child. 18All who heard it were filled
with wonder at what the shepherds told them. 19Mary
remembered all these things and thought deeply about
them. 20The shepherds went back, singing praises to
God for all they had heard and seen; it had been just
as the angel had told them.

Glory to God in the highest heaven

Jesus Is Named

[21]A week later, when the time came for the baby to be circumcised, he was named Jesus, the name which the angel had given him before he had been conceived.

Jesus Is Presented in the Temple

[22]The time came for Joseph and Mary to do what the Law of Moses commanded and perform the ceremony of purification. So they took the child to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord,[23]as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be dedicated to the Lord." [24]They also went to offer a sacrifice of a pair of doves or two young pigeons, as required by the law of the Lord.

[25]Now there was a man living in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. He was a good and God-fearing man, and was waiting for Israel to be saved. The Holy Spirit was with him, [26]and he had been assured by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's promised Messiah. [27]Led by the Spirit, Simeon went into the temple. When the parents brought the child Jesus into the temple to do for him what the Law required, [28]Simeon took the child in his arms, and gave thanks to God:

[29] "Now, Lord, you have kept your promise,
and you may let your servant go in peace.
[30] With my own eyes I have seen your salvation,
[31] which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples:
[32] A light to reveal your way to the Gentiles,
and bring glory to your people Israel."

[33]The child's father and mother were amazed at the things Simeon said about him. [34]Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, "This child is chosen by God for the destruction and the salvation of many in Israel. He will be a sign from God which many people will speak against, [35]and so reveal their secret thoughts.

And sorrow, like a sharp sword, will break your own heart."

[36]There was a prophetess named Anna, daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was an old woman who had been married for seven years, [37]and then had been a widow for eighty-four years. She never left the temple; day and night she worshiped God, fasting and praying. [38]That very same hour she arrived and gave thanks to God, and spoke about the child to all who were waiting for God to redeem Jerusalem.

The Return to Nazareth

[39]When they had finished doing all that was required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their home town of Nazareth. [40]The child grew and became strong; he was full of wisdom, and God's blessings were with him.

The Boy Jesus in the Temple

[41]Every year the parents of Jesus went to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover. [42]When Jesus was twelve years old, they went to the feast as usual. [43]When the days of the feast were over, they started back home, but the boy Jesus stayed in Jerusalem. His parents did not know this; [44]they thought that he was with the group, so they traveled a whole day, and then started looking for him among their relatives and friends. [45]They did not find him, so they went back to Jerusalem looking for him. [46]On the third day they found him in the temple, sitting with the Jewish teachers, listening to them and asking questions. [47]All who heard him were amazed at his intelligent answers. [48]His parents were amazed when they saw him, and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been terribly worried trying to find you."

[49]He answered them, "Why did you have to look for me? Didn't you know that I had to be in my Father's house?" [50]But they did not understand what he said to them.

[51]So Jesus went back with them to Nazareth, where he was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these

They found him in the temple

things in her heart. 52And Jesus grew, both in body and
in wisdom, gaining favor with God and men.

The Preaching of John the Baptist

(Also Matt. 3.1–12; Mark 1.1–8; John 1.19–28)

3 It was the fifteenth year of the rule of Emperor
Tiberius; Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea,
Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler
of the territory of Iturea and Trachonitis; Lysanias was
ruler of Abilene, 2and Annas and Caiaphas were high
priests. It was at this time that the word of God came
to John, the son of Zechariah, in the desert. 3So John
went throughout the whole territory of the Jordan
River. "Turn away from your sins and be baptized," he
preached, "and God will forgive your sins." 4As the
prophet Isaiah had written in his book,

"Someone is shouting in the desert:
'Get the Lord's road ready for him;
make a straight path for him to travel!
5 All low places must be filled up,
all hills and mountains leveled off.
The winding roads must be made
straight,
and the rough paths made smooth.
6 All mankind will see God's salvation!' "

[7]Crowds of people came out to John to be baptized by him. "You snakes!" he said to them. "Who told you that you could escape from God's wrath that is about to come? [8]Do the things that will show that you have turned from your sins. And don't start saying among yourselves, 'Abraham is our ancestor.' I tell you that God can take these rocks and make descendants for Abraham! [9]The ax is ready to cut down the trees at the roots; every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown in the fire."

[10]The people asked him, "What are we to do, then?"

[11]He answered, "Whoever has two shirts must give one to the man who has none, and whoever has food must share it."

[12]Some tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what are we to do?"

[13]"Don't collect more than is legal," he told them.

[14]Some soldiers also asked him, "What about us? What are we to do?"

He said to them, "Don't take money from anyone by force or accuse anyone falsely. Be content with your pay."

[15]People's hopes began to rise, and they began to wonder about John, thinking that perhaps he might be the Messiah. [16]So John said to all of them, "I baptize you with water, but one who is much greater than I is coming. I am not good enough even to untie his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. [17]He has his winnowing shovel with him, to thresh out all the grain and gather the wheat into his barn; but he will burn the chaff in a fire that never goes out."

[18]In many different ways John urged the people as he preached the Good News to them. [19]But John spoke against Governor Herod, because he had married Herodias, his brother's wife, and had done many other evil things. [20]Then Herod did an even worse thing by putting John in prison.

The Baptism of Jesus

(Also Matt. 3.13–17; Mark 1.9–11)

[21]After all the people had been baptized, Jesus also was baptized. While he was praying, heaven was opened, [22]and the Holy Spirit came down upon him in

bodily form, like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my own dear Son. I am well pleased with you."

The Genealogy of Jesus

(Also Matt. 1.1–17)

[23]When Jesus began his work he was about thirty years old; he was the son, so people thought, of Joseph, who was the son of Heli, [24]the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, [25]the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, [26]the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, [27]the son of Joanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri, [28]the son of Melchi, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er, [29]the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, [30]the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim, [31]the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, [32]the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Salmon, the son of Nahshon, [33]the son of Amminadab, the son of Admin, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, [34]the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, [35]the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, [36]the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, [37]the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan, [38]the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

The Temptation of Jesus

(Also Matt. 4.1–11; Mark 1.12–13)

4 Jesus returned from the Jordan full of the Holy Spirit, and was led by the Spirit into the desert, [2]where he was tempted by the Devil for forty days. In all that time he ate nothing, so that he was hungry when it was over.

3The Devil said to him, "If you are God's Son, order
this stone to turn into bread."
4Jesus answered, "The scripture says, 'Man cannot
live on bread alone.'"
5Then the Devil took him up and showed him in a
second all the kingdoms of the world. 6"I will give you
all this power, and all this wealth," the Devil told him.
"It was all handed over to me and I can give it to
anyone I choose. 7All this will be yours, then, if you
kneel down before me."
8Jesus answered, "The scripture says, 'Worship the
Lord your God and serve only him!'"
9Then the Devil took him to Jerusalem and set him
on the highest point of the temple, and said to him, "If
you are God's Son, throw yourself down from here.
10For the scripture says, 'God will order his angels to
take good care of you.' 11It also says, 'They will hold
you up with their hands so that not even your feet will
be hurt on the stones.'"
12Jesus answered him, "The scripture says, 'You
must not put the Lord your God to the test.'"
13When the Devil finished tempting Jesus in every
way, he left him for a while.

Jesus Begins His Work in Galilee

(Also Matt. 4.12–17; Mark 1.14–15)

14Then Jesus returned to Galilee, and the power of the
Holy Spirit was with him. The news about him spread
throughout all that territory. 15He taught in their syna-
gogues and was praised by all.

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

(Also Matt. 13.53–58; Mark 6.1–6)

16Then Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been
brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went as usual to
the synagogue. He stood up to read the Scriptures, 17and
was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled
the scroll and found the place where it is written,

18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has chosen me to preach the
Good News to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to
the captives,

and recovery of sight to the blind;
to set free the oppressed,
19 and announce the year when the Lord
will save his people."

20 Jesus rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. All the people in the synagogue had their eyes fixed on him. 21 He began speaking to them, "This passage of scripture has come true today, as you heard it being read."

22 They were all well impressed with him, and marveled at the beautiful words that he spoke. They said, "Isn't he the son of Joseph?"

23 He said to them, "I am sure that you will quote this proverb to me, 'Doctor, heal yourself.' You will also say to me, 'Do here in your own home town the same things we were told happened in Capernaum.' 24 I tell you this," Jesus added. "A prophet is never welcomed in his own home town. 25 Listen to me: it is true that there were many widows in Israel during the time of Elijah, when there was no rain for three and a half years and there was a great famine throughout the whole land. 26 Yet Elijah was not sent to a single one of them, but only to a widow of Zarephath, in the territory of Sidon. 27 And there were many lepers in Israel during the time of the prophet Elisha; yet not one of them was made clean, but only Naaman the Syrian."

28 All the people in the synagogue were filled with anger when they heard this. 29 They rose up, dragged Jesus out of town, and took him to the top of the hill on which their town was built, to throw him over the cliff. 30 But he walked through the middle of the crowd and went his way.

A Man with an Evil Spirit

(Also Mark 1.21–28)

31 Then Jesus went to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, where he taught the people on the Sabbath. 32 They were all amazed at the way he taught, because his words had authority. 33 There was a man in the synagogue who had the spirit of an evil demon in him; he screamed out in a loud voice, 34 "Ah! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Are you here to destroy us? I know who you are: you are God's holy messenger!"

35 "Jesus commanded the spirit, "Be quiet, and come
out of the man!" The demon threw the man down in
front of them and went out of him without doing him
any harm.
36 They were all amazed, and said to one another,
"What kind of words are these? With authority and
power this man gives orders to the evil spirits, and
they come out!" 37 And the report about Jesus spread
everywhere in that region.

Jesus Heals Many People

(Also Matt. 8.14–17; Mark 1.29–34)

38 Jesus left the synagogue and went to Simon's home.
Simon's mother-in-law was sick with a high fever, and
they spoke to Jesus about her. 39 He went and stood at
her bedside, and gave a command to the fever. The fever
left her, and she got up at once and began to wait on
them.
40 After sunset, all who had friends who were sick with
various diseases brought them to Jesus; he placed his
hands on every one of them and healed them all. 41 De-
mons, also, went out from many people, screaming,
"You are the Son of God!"
Jesus commanded them and would not let them
speak, because they knew that he was the Messiah.

Jesus Preaches in the Synagogues

(Also Mark 1.35–39)

42 At daybreak Jesus left the town and went off to a
lonely place. The people started looking for him, and
when they found him they tried to keep him from leav-
ing. 43 But he said to them, "I must preach the Good
News of the Kingdom of God in other towns also, be-
cause that is what God sent me to do."
44 So he preached in the synagogues all over the coun-
try.

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

(Also Matt. 4.18–22; Mark 1.16–20)

5 One time Jesus was standing on the shore of Lake
Gennesaret while the people pushed their way up
to him to listen to the word of God. 2 He saw two boats
pulled up on the beach; the fishermen had left them and

Let your nets down for a catch

were washing the nets. [3]Jesus got into one of the boats —it belonged to Simon—and asked him to push off a little from the shore. Jesus sat in the boat and taught the crowd.

[4]When he finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Push the boat out further to the deep water, and you and your partners let your nets down for a catch."

[5]"Master," Simon answered, "we worked hard all night long and caught nothing. But if you say so, I will let down the nets." [6]They let the nets down and caught such a large number of fish that the nets were about to break. [7]So they motioned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They came and filled both boats so full of fish that they were about to sink. [8]When Simon Peter saw what had happened, he fell on his knees before Jesus and said, "Go away from me, Lord! I am a sinful man!"

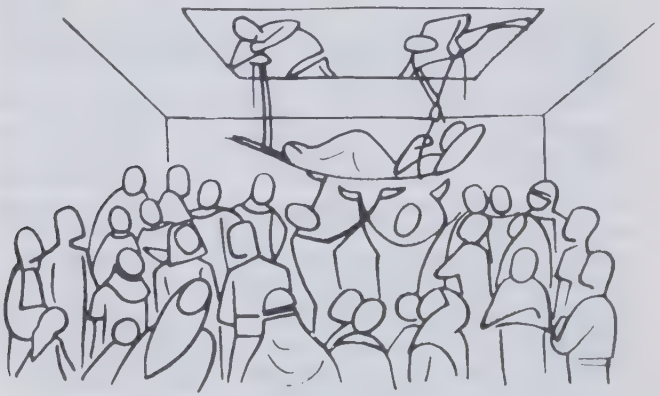
[9]He and the others with him were all amazed at the large number of fish they had caught. [10]The same was true of Simon's partners, James and John, the sons of Zebedee. Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will be catching men."

[11]They pulled the boats on the beach, left everything, and followed Jesus.

Jesus Makes a Leper Clean

(Also Matt. 8.1–4; Mark 1.40–45)

12 Once Jesus was in a certain town where there was
a man who was covered with leprosy. When he saw
Jesus, he threw himself down and begged him, "Sir, if
you want to, you can make me clean!"
13 Jesus reached out and touched him. "I do want
to," he answered. "Be clean!" At once the leprosy left
the man. 14 Jesus ordered him, "Don't tell this to any-
one, but go straight to the priest and let him examine
you; then offer the sacrifice, as Moses ordered, to
prove to everyone that you are now clean."
15 But the news about Jesus spread all the more
widely, and crowds of people came to hear him and be
healed from their diseases. 16 But he would go away to
lonely places, where he prayed.



Let him down on his bed into the middle of the group

Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man

(Also Matt. 9.1–8; Mark 2.1–12)

17 One day when Jesus was teaching, some Pharisees
and teachers of the Law were sitting there who had
come from every town in Galilee and Judea, and from

Jerusalem. The power of the Lord was present for Jesus to heal the sick. [18]Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a bed, and they tried to take him into the house and lay him before Jesus. [19]Because of the crowd, however, they could find no way to take him in. So they carried him up on the roof, made an opening in the tiles, and let him down on his bed into the middle of the group in front of Jesus. [20]When Jesus saw how much faith they had, he said to the man, "Your sins are forgiven you, my friend."

[21]The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees began to say to themselves, "Who is this man who speaks against God in this way? No man can forgive sins; God alone can!"

[22]Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Why do you think such things? [23]Is it easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? [24]I will prove to you, then, that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, pick up your bed, and go home!"

[25]At once the man got up before them all, took the bed he had been lying on, and went home, praising God. [26]They were all completely amazed! Full of fear, they praised God, saying, "What marvelous things we have seen today!"

Jesus Calls Levi

(Also Matt. 9.9–13; Mark 2.13–17)

[27]After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting in his office. Jesus said to him, "Follow me." [28]Levi got up, left everything, and followed him.

[29]Then Levi had a big feast in his house for Jesus, and there was a large number of tax collectors and other people at the table with them. [30]Some Pharisees and teachers of the Law who belonged to their group complained to Jesus' disciples. "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and outcasts?" they asked.

[31]Jesus answered them, "People who are well do not need a doctor, but only those who are sick. [32]I have not come to call the respectable people to repent, but the outcasts."

The Question about Fasting

(Also Matt. 9.14–17; Mark 2.18–22)

33 Some people said to Jesus, "The disciples of John
fast frequently and offer up prayers, and the disciples of
the Pharisees do the same; but your disciples eat and
drink."
34 Jesus answered, "Do you think you can make the
guests at a wedding party go without food as long as
the bridegroom is with them? Of course not! 35 But the
time will come when the bridegroom will be taken
away from them, and they will go without food in
those days."
36 Jesus told them this parable also, "No one tears a
piece off a new coat to patch up an old coat. If he does,
he will have torn the new coat, and the piece of new
cloth will not match the old. 37 Nor does anyone pour
new wine into used wineskins. If he does, the new
wine will burst the skins, the wine will pour out, and
the skins will be ruined. 38 No! New wine should be
poured into fresh skins! 39 And no one wants new wine
after drinking old wine. 'The old is better,' he says."

The Question about the Sabbath

(Also Matt. 12.1–8; Mark 2.23–28)

6 Jesus was walking through some wheat fields on a
Sabbath day. His disciples began to pick the heads
of wheat, rub them in their hands, and eat the grain.
2 Some Pharisees said, "Why are you doing what our
Law says you cannot do on the Sabbath?"
3 Jesus answered them, "Haven't you read what David
did when he and his men were hungry? 4 He went into
the house of God, took the bread offered to God, ate it,
and gave it also to his men. Yet it is against our Law for
anyone to eat it except the priests."
5 And Jesus concluded, "The Son of Man is Lord of
the Sabbath."

The Man with a Crippled Hand

(Also Matt. 12.9–14; Mark 3.1–6)

6 On another Sabbath Jesus went into a synagogue and
taught. A man was there whose right hand was crippled.
7 Some teachers of the Law and Pharisees wanted some

reason to accuse Jesus of doing wrong; so they watched him very closely to see if he would cure on the Sabbath. [8]But Jesus knew their thoughts and said to the man with the crippled hand, "Stand up and come here to the front." The man got up and stood there. [9]Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you: What does our Law allow us to do on the Sabbath? To help or to harm? To save a man's life or destroy it?" [10]He looked around at them all, then said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He did so, and his hand became well again.

[11]But they were filled with rage and began to discuss among themselves what they could do to Jesus.

Jesus Chooses the Twelve Apostles

(Also Matt. 10.1–4; Mark 3.13–19)

[12]At that time Jesus went up a hill to pray, and spent the whole night there praying to God. [13]When day came he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he named apostles: [14]Simon (whom he also named Peter) and his brother Andrew; James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, [15]Matthew and Thomas, James, the son of Alphaeus, and Simon (who was called the Patriot), [16]Judas, the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became the traitor.

Jesus Teaches and Heals

(Also Matt. 4.23–25)

[17]Coming down from the hill with them, Jesus stood on a level place with a large number of his disciples. A great crowd of people was there from all over Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from the coast cities of Tyre and Sidon; [18]they came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those who were troubled by evil spirits also came and were healed. [19]All the people tried to touch him, for power was going out from him and healing them all.

Happiness and Sorrow

(Also Matt. 5.1–12)

[20]Jesus looked at his disciples and said,

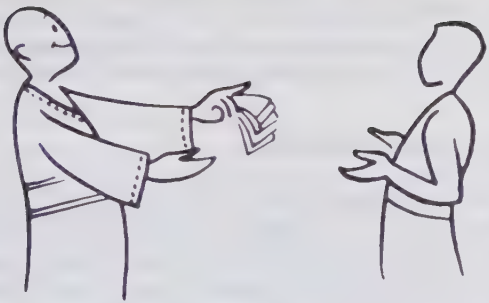
"Happy are you poor;
the Kingdom of God is yours!

[21]"Happy are you who are hungry now;

you will be filled!
"Happy are you who weep now;
you will laugh!
22"Happy are you when men hate you, and reject you,
and insult you, and say that you are evil, because of the
Son of Man! 23Be glad when that happens, and dance for
joy, because a great reward is kept for you in heaven.
For their ancestors did the very same things to the
prophets.
24"But how terrible for you who are rich
now;
you have had your easy life!
25"How terrible for you who are full now;
you will go hungry!
"How terrible for you who laugh now;
you will mourn and weep!
26"How terrible when all men speak well of you; be-
cause their ancestors said the very same things to the
false prophets."

Love for Enemies
(Also Matt. 5.38–48; 7.12a)

27"But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do
good to those who hate you, 28bless those who curse
you, and pray for those who mistreat you. 29If anyone
hits you on one cheek, let him hit the other one too; if
someone takes your coat, let him have your shirt as well.
30Give to everyone who asks you for something, and
when someone takes what is yours, do not ask for it
back. 31Do for others just what you want them to do for
you.
32"If you love only the people who love you, why
should you receive a blessing? Even sinners love those
who love them! 33And if you do good only to those who
do good to you, why should you receive a blessing? Even
sinners do that! 34And if you lend only to those from
whom you hope to get it back, why should you receive
a blessing? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the
same amount! 35No! Love your enemies and do good to
them; lend and expect nothing back. You will have a
great reward, and you will be sons of the Most High
God. For he is good to the ungrateful and the wicked.
36Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."



Lend and expect nothing back

Judging Others

(Also Matt. 7.1–5)

37 "Do not judge others, and God will not judge you;
do not condemn others, and God will not condemn you;
forgive others, and God will forgive you. 38 Give to others, and God will give to you: you will receive a full
measure, a generous helping, poured into your hands—
all that you can hold. The measure you use for others is
the one God will use for you."

39 And Jesus told them this parable, "One blind man
cannot lead another one; if he does, both will fall into
a ditch. 40 No pupil is greater than his teacher; but
every pupil, when he has completed his training, will
be like his teacher.

41 "Why do you look at the speck in your brother's
eye, but pay no attention to the log in your own eye?
42 How can you say to your brother, 'Please, brother,
let me take that speck out of your eye,' yet not even
see the log in your own eye? You hypocrite! Take the
log out of your own eye first, and then you will be able
to see and take the speck out of your brother's eye."

A Tree and Its Fruit

(Also Matt. 7.16–20; 12.33–35)

43 "A healthy tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a
poor tree bear good fruit. 44 Every tree is known by the
fruit it bears; you do not pick figs from thorn bushes, or

gather grapes from bramble bushes. [45]A good man brings good out of the treasure of good things in his heart; a bad man brings bad out of his treasure of bad things. For a man's mouth speaks what his heart is full of."

The Two House Builders

(Also Matt. 7.24–27)

[46]"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and don't do what I tell you? [47]Everyone who comes to me, and listens to my words, and obeys them—I will show you what he is like. [48]He is like a man who built a house: he dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. The river flooded over and hit that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built. [49]But the one who hears my words and does not obey them is like a man who built a house on the ground, without laying a foundation; when the flood hit that house it fell at once—what a terrible crash that was!"

Jesus Heals a Roman Officer's Servant

(Also Matt. 8.5–13)

7 When Jesus had finished saying all these things to the people, he went to Capernaum. [2]A Roman officer there had a servant who was very dear to him; the man was sick and about to die. [3]When the officer heard about Jesus, he sent to him some Jewish elders to ask him to come and heal his servant. [4]They came to Jesus and begged him earnestly, "This man really deserves your help. [5]He loves our people and he himself built a synagogue for us."

[6]So Jesus went with them. He was not far from the house when the officer sent friends to tell him, "Sir, don't trouble yourself. I do not deserve to have you come into my house, [7]neither do I consider myself worthy to come to you in person. Just give the order and my servant will get well. [8]I, too, am a man placed under the authority of superior officers, and I have soldiers under me. I order this one, 'Go!' and he goes; I order that one, 'Come!' and he comes; and I order my slave, 'Do this!' and he does it."

[9]Jesus was surprised when he heard this; he turned around and said to the crowd following him, "I have

never found such faith as this, I tell you, not even in Israel!"

10The messengers went back to the officer's house and found his servant well.

Jesus Raises a Widow's Son

11Soon afterward Jesus went to a town named Nain; his disciples and a large crowd went with him. 12Just as he arrived at the gate of the town, a funeral procession was coming out. The dead man was the only son of a woman who was a widow, and a large crowd from the city was with her. 13When the Lord saw her his heart was filled with pity for her and he said to her, "Don't cry." 14Then he walked over and touched the coffin, and the men carrying it stopped. Jesus said, "Young man! Get up, I tell you!" 15The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother.

16Everyone was filled with fear, and they praised God, "A great prophet has appeared among us!" and, "God has come to save his people!"

17This news about Jesus went out through all the country and the surrounding territory.

The Messengers from John the Baptist

(Also Matt. 11.2–19)

18John's disciples told him about all these things. He called two of them to him 19and sent them to the Lord to ask him, "Are you the one John said was going to come, or should we expect someone else?"

20When they came to Jesus they said, "John the Baptist sent us to ask, 'Are you the one he said was going to come, or should we expect someone else?' "

21At that very time Jesus healed many people from their sicknesses, diseases, and evil spirits, and gave sight to many blind people. 22He answered John's messengers, "Go back and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind can see, the lame can walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf can hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is preached to the poor. 23How happy is he who has no doubts about me!"

24After John's messengers had left, Jesus began to speak about John to the crowds, "When you went out to John in the desert, what did you expect to see? A

blade of grass bending in the wind? [25]What did you go out to see? A man dressed up in fancy clothes? Really, those who dress like that and live in luxury are found in palaces! [26]Tell me, what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you you saw much more than a prophet. [27]For John is the one of whom the scripture says, 'Here is my messenger, says God; I will send him ahead of you to open the way for you.' [28]I tell you," Jesus added, "John is greater than any man ever born; but he who is least in the Kingdom of God is greater than he."

[29]All the people and the tax collectors heard him; they were the ones who had obeyed God's righteous demands and had been baptized by John. [30]But the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law rejected God's purpose for themselves, and refused to be baptized by John.

[31]"Now, to what can I compare the people of this day? What are they like? [32]They are like children sitting in the market place. One group shouts to the other, 'We played wedding music for you, but you would not dance! We sang funeral songs, but you would not cry!' [33]John the Baptist came, and he fasted and drank no wine, and you said, 'He has a demon in him!' [34]The Son of Man came, and he ate and drank, and you said, 'Look at this man! He is a glutton and wine-drinker, a friend of tax collectors and outcasts!' [35]God's wisdom, however, is shown to be true by all who accept it."

Jesus at the Home of Simon the Pharisee

[36]A Pharisee invited Jesus to have dinner with him. Jesus went to his house and sat down to eat. [37]There was a woman in that town who lived a sinful life. She heard that Jesus was eating in the Pharisee's house, so she brought an alabaster jar full of perfume [38]and stood behind Jesus, by his feet, crying and wetting his feet with her tears. Then she dried his feet with her hair, kissed them, and poured the perfume on them. [39]When the Pharisee who had invited Jesus saw this, he said to himself, "If this man really were a prophet, he would know who this woman is who is touching him; he would know what kind of sinful life she leads!"

40 Jesus spoke up and said to him, "Simon, I have
something to tell you."
"Yes, Teacher," he said, "tell me."
41 "There were two men who owed money to a money-
lender," Jesus began; "one owed him five hundred dol-
lars and the other one fifty dollars. 42 Neither one could
pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Which
one, then, will love him more?"
43 "I suppose," answered Simon, "that it would be the
one who was forgiven more."
"Your answer is correct," said Jesus. 44 Then he turned
to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this
woman? I came into your home, and you gave me no
water for my feet, but she has washed my feet with her
tears and dried them with her hair. 45 You did not wel-

She has covered my feet with perfume

come me with a kiss, but she has not stopped kissing my
feet since I came. 46 You provided no oil for my head,
but she has covered my feet with perfume. 47 I tell you,
then, the great love she has shown proves that her many
sins have been forgiven. Whoever has been forgiven
little, however, shows only a little love."
48 Then Jesus said to the woman, "Your sins are for-
given."

49The others sitting at the table began to say to themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?"

50But Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Women Who Accompanied Jesus

8 Some time later Jesus traveled through towns and villages, preaching the Good News about the Kingdom of God. The twelve disciples went with him, 2and so did some women who had been healed of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (who was called Magdalene), from whom seven demons had been driven out; 3Joanna, the wife of Chuza who was an officer in Herod's court; and Susanna, and many other women who used their own resources to help Jesus and his disciples.

The Parable of the Sower

(Also Matt. 13.1–9; Mark 4.1–9)

4People kept coming to Jesus from one town after another; and when a great crowd gathered, Jesus told this parable,

5"A man went out to sow his seed. As he scattered the seed in the field, some of it fell along the path, where it was stepped on, and the birds ate it up. 6Some of it fell on rocky ground, and when the plants sprouted they dried up, because the soil had no moisture. 7Some of the seed fell among thorns, which grew up with the plants and choked them. 8And some seeds fell in good soil; the plants grew and bore grain, one hundred grains each."

And Jesus concluded, "Listen, then, if you have ears to hear with!"

The Purpose of the Parables

(Also Matt. 13.10–17; Mark 4.10–12)

9His disciples asked Jesus what this parable meant. 10Jesus answered, "The knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of God has been given to you; but to the rest it comes by means of parables, so that they may look but not see, and listen but not understand."

Jesus Explains the Parable of the Sower

(Also Matt. 13.18–23; Mark 4.13–20)

11"This is what the parable means: the seed is the

word of God. 12The seed that fell along the path stands for those who hear; but the Devil comes and takes the message away from their hearts to keep them from believing and being saved. 13The seed that fell on rocky ground stands for those who hear the message and receive it gladly. But it does not sink deep into them; they believe only for a while, and fall away when the time of testing comes. 14The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear; but the worries and riches and pleasures of this life crowd in and choke them, and their fruit never ripens. 15The seed that fell in good soil stands for those who hear the message and retain it in a good and obedient heart, and persist until they bear fruit."

A Lamp under a Bowl

(Also Mark 4.21–25)

16"No one lights a lamp and covers it with a bowl or puts it under a bed. Instead, he puts it on the lampstand, so that people will see the light as they come in. 17Whatever is hidden away will be brought out into the open, and whatever is covered up will be found and brought to light.

18"Be careful, then, how you listen; because whoever has something will be given more, but whoever has nothing will have taken away from him even the little he thinks he has."

Jesus' Mother and Brothers

(Also Matt. 12.46–50; Mark 3.31–35)

19Jesus' mother and brothers came to him, but were unable to join him because of the crowd. 20Someone said to Jesus, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside and want to see you."

21Jesus said to them all, "My mother and brothers are those who hear the word of God and obey it."

Jesus Calms a Storm

(Also Matt. 8.23–27; Mark 4.35–41)

22One day Jesus got into a boat with his disciples and said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they started out. 23As they were sailing, Jesus went to sleep. A strong wind blew down on the lake, and the boat began to fill with water, putting them all in great

danger. [24]The disciples came to Jesus and woke him up, saying, "Master, Master! We are about to die!"

Jesus got up and gave a command to the wind and to the stormy water; they quieted down and there was a great calm. [25]Then he said to the disciples, "Where is your faith?"

But they were amazed and afraid, and said to one another, "Who is this man? He gives orders to the winds and waves, and they obey him!"

Jesus Heals a Man with Demons

(Also Matt. 8.28–34; Mark 5.1–20)

[26]They sailed on over to the territory of the Gergesenes, which is across the lake from Galilee. [27]As Jesus stepped ashore, he was met by a man from the town who had demons in him. He had gone for a long time without clothes, and would not stay at home, but spent his time in the burial caves. [28]When he saw Jesus he gave a loud cry, fell down before him, and said in a loud voice, "Jesus, Son of the Most High God! What do you want with me? I beg you, don't punish me!" [29]He said this because Jesus had ordered the evil spirit to go out of him. Many times it had seized him, and even though he was kept a prisoner, his hands and feet tied with chains, he would break the chains and be driven by the demon out into the desert.

[30]Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"

"My name is 'Mob,' " he answered—because many demons had gone into him. [31]The demons begged Jesus not to send them into the abyss.

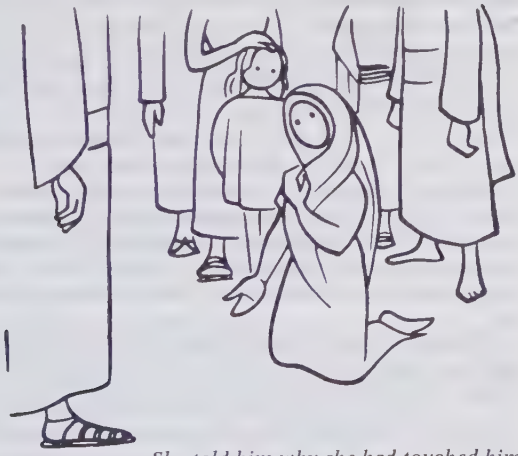
[32]A large herd of pigs was near by, feeding on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into the pigs, and he let them. [33]So the demons went out of the man and into the pigs; the whole herd rushed down the side of the cliff into the lake and were drowned.

[34]The men who were taking care of the pigs saw what happened, so they ran off and spread the news in the town and among the farms. [35]People went out to see what had happened. They came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone out sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind; and they were all afraid. [36]Those who had seen it told the people how the man had been cured. [37]Then all the people from

the territory of the Gergesenes asked Jesus to go away, because they were terribly afraid. So Jesus got into the boat and left. [38]The man from whom the demons had gone out begged Jesus, "Let me go with you."

But Jesus sent him away, saying, [39]"Go back home and tell what God has done for you."

The man went through the whole town telling what Jesus had done for him.



She told him why she had touched him

Jairus' Daughter and the Woman Who Touched Jesus' Cloak

(Also Matt. 9.18–26; Mark 5.21–43)

[40]When Jesus returned to the other side of the lake the crowd welcomed him, because they had all been waiting for him. [41]Then a man named Jairus arrived, an official in the local synagogue. He threw himself down at Jesus' feet and begged him to go to his home, [42]because his only daughter, twelve years old, was dying.

As Jesus went along, the people were crowding him from every side. [43]A certain woman was there who had suffered from severe bleeding for twelve years; she had spent all she had on doctors, but no one had been able to cure her. [44]She came up in the crowd behind Jesus

and touched the edge of his cloak, and her bleeding stopped at once. [45]Jesus asked, "Who touched me?"

Everyone denied it, and Peter said, "Master, the people are all around you and crowding in on you."

[46]But Jesus said, "Someone touched me, for I knew it when power went out of me." [47]The woman saw that she had been found out, so she came, trembling, and threw herself at Jesus' feet. There, in front of everybody, she told him why she had touched him and how she had been healed at once. [48]Jesus said to her, "My daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

[49]While Jesus was saying this, a messenger came from the official's house. "Your daughter has died," he told Jairus; "don't bother the Teacher any longer."

[50]But Jesus heard it and said to Jairus, "Don't be afraid; only believe, and she will be well."

[51]When he arrived at the house he would not let anyone go in with him except Peter, John, and James, and the child's father and mother. [52]Everyone there was crying and mourning for the child. Jesus said, "Don't cry; the child is not dead—she is only sleeping!"

[53]They all made fun of him, because they knew that she was dead. [54]But Jesus took her by the hand and called out, "Get up, child!" [55]Her life returned and she got up at once; and Jesus ordered them to give her something to eat. [56]Her parents were astounded, but Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone what had happened.

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve Disciples

(Also Matt. 10.5–15; Mark 6.7–13)

9 Jesus called the twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases. [2]Then he sent them out to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick. [3]He said to them, "Take nothing with you for the trip: no walking stick, no beggar's bag, no food, no money, not even an extra shirt. [4]Wherever you are welcomed, stay in the same house until you leave that town; [5]wherever people don't welcome you, leave that town and shake the dust off your feet as a warning to them."

[6]The disciples left and traveled through all the vil-

lages, preaching the Good News and healing people everywhere.

Herod's Confusion

(Also Matt. 14.1–12; Mark 6.14–29)

7Herod, the ruler of Galilee, heard about all the things that were happening; he was very confused about it because some people were saying, "John the Baptist has come back to life!" 8Others said that Elijah had appeared, while others said that one of the prophets of long ago had come back to life. 9Herod said, "I had John's head cut off; but who is this man I hear these things about?" And he kept trying to see Jesus.

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

(Also Matt. 14.13–21; Mark 6.30–44; John 6.1–14)

10The apostles came back and told Jesus everything they had done. He took them with him and they went off by themselves to a town named Bethsaida. 11When the crowds heard about it they followed him. He welcomed them, spoke to them about the Kingdom of God, and healed those who needed it.

12When the sun had begun to set, the twelve disciples came to him and said, "Send the people away so they can go to the villages and farms around here and find food and lodging, because this is a lonely place."

13But Jesus said to them, "You yourselves give them something to eat."

They answered, "All we have is five loaves and two fish. Do you want us to go and buy food for this whole crowd?" 14(There were about five thousand men there.)

Jesus said to his disciples, "Make the people sit down in groups of about fifty each."

15The disciples did so and made them all sit down. 16Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up to heaven, thanked God for them, broke them, and gave them to the disciples to distribute to the people. 17They all ate and had enough; and the disciples took up twelve baskets of what the people left over.

Peter's Declaration about Jesus

(Also Matt. 16.13–19; Mark 8.27–29)

18One time when Jesus was praying alone, the disci-

ples came to him. "Who do the crowds say I am?" he asked them.

[19]"Some say that you are John the Baptist," they answered. "Others say that you are Elijah, while others say that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life."

[20]"What about you?" he asked them. "Who do you say I am?"

Peter answered, "You are God's Messiah."

Jesus Speaks about His Suffering and Death

(Also Matt. 16.20–28; Mark 8.30—9.1)

[21]Then Jesus gave them strict orders not to tell this to anyone, [22]and added, "The Son of Man must suffer much, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law. He will be put to death, and be raised to life on the third day."

[23]And he said to all, "If anyone wants to come with me, he must forget himself, take up his cross every day, and follow me. [24]For whoever wants to save his own life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. [25]Will a man gain anything if he wins the whole world but is himself lost or defeated? Of course not! [26]If a man is ashamed of me and of my teaching, then the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. [27]Remember this! There are some here, I tell you, who will not die until they have seen the Kingdom of God."

The Transfiguration

(Also Matt. 17.1–8; Mark 9.2–8)

[28]About a week after he had said these things, Jesus took Peter, John, and James with him and went up a hill to pray. [29]While he was praying, his face changed its appearance and his clothes became dazzling white. [30]Suddenly two men were there talking with him. They were Moses and Elijah, [31]who appeared in heavenly glory and talked with Jesus about how he would soon fulfill God's purpose by dying in Jerusalem. [32]Peter and his companions were sound asleep, but they awoke and saw Jesus' glory and the two men who were standing

with him. 33As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, "Master, it is a good thing that we are here. We will make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." (He really did not know what he was saying.)

34While he was still speaking, a cloud appeared and covered them with its shadow; and the disciples were afraid as the cloud came over them. 35A voice said from the cloud, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen —listen to him!"

36When the voice stopped, there was Jesus all alone. The disciples kept quiet about all this, and told no one at that time anything they had seen.

Jesus Heals a Boy with an Evil Spirit

(Also Matt. 17.14–18; Mark 9.14–27)

37The next day they went down from the hill, and a large crowd met Jesus. 38A man shouted from the crowd, "Teacher! Look, I beg you, at my son—my only son! 39A spirit attacks him with a sudden shout and throws him into a fit, so that he foams at the mouth; it keeps on hurting him and will hardly let him go! 40I begged your disciples to drive it out, but they couldn't."

41Jesus answered, "How unbelieving and wrong you people are! How long must I stay with you? How long do I have to put up with you?" Then he said to the man, "Bring your son here."

42As the boy was coming, the demon knocked him to the ground and threw him into a fit. Jesus gave a command to the evil spirit, healed the boy, and gave him back to his father. 43All the people were amazed at the mighty power of God.

Jesus Speaks Again about His Death

(Also Matt. 17.22–23; Mark 9.30–32)

The people were still marveling at everything Jesus was doing, when he said to his disciples, 44"Don't forget what I am about to tell you! The Son of Man is going to be handed over to the power of men." 45But they did not know what this meant. It had been hidden from them so that they could not understand it, and they were afraid to ask him about the matter.

Who Is the Greatest?

(Also Matt. 18.1–5; Mark 9.33–37)

46 An argument came up among the disciples as to
which one of them was the greatest. 47 Jesus knew what
they were thinking, so he took a child, stood him by his
side, 48 and said to them, "Whoever in my name wel-
comes this child, welcomes me; and whoever welcomes
me, also welcomes the one who sent me. For he who is
least among you all is the greatest."

He who is least among you all is the greatest

Who Is not against You Is for You

(Also Mark 9.38–40)

49 John spoke up, "Master, we saw a man driving out
demons in your name, and we told him to stop, because
he doesn't belong to our group."
50 "Do not try to stop him," Jesus said to him and to
the other disciples, "because whoever is not against
you is for you."

A Samaritan Village Refuses to Receive Jesus

51 As the days drew near when Jesus would be taken
up to heaven, he made up his mind and set out on his
way to Jerusalem. 52 He sent messengers ahead of him,
who left and went into a Samaritan village to get every-
thing ready for him. 53 But the people there would not
receive him, because it was plain that he was going to
Jerusalem. 54 When the disciples James and John saw
this, they said, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down
from heaven and destroy them?"
55 Jesus turned and rebuked them; 56 and they went
on to another village.

The Would-Be Followers of Jesus

(Also Matt. 8.19–22)

57 As they went on their way, a certain man said to
Jesus, "I will follow you wherever you go."
58 Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds have
nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lie down and
rest." 59 He said to another man, "Follow me."
But that man said, "Sir, first let me go back and bury
my father."
60 Jesus answered, "Let the dead bury their own dead.
You go and preach the Kingdom of God."
61 Another man said, "I will follow you, sir; but first let
me go and say good-bye to my family."
62 Jesus said to him, "Anyone who starts to plow and
then keeps looking back is of no use for the Kingdom of
God."

Jesus Sends Out the Seventy-two

10 After this the Lord chose another seventy-two
men and sent them out, two by two, to go ahead
of him to every town and place where he himself was
about to go. 2 He said to them, "There is a large harvest,
but few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the
harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his
harvest. 3 Go! I am sending you like lambs among
wolves. 4 Don't take a purse, or a beggar's bag, or shoes;
don't stop to greet anyone on the road. 5 Whenever you
go into a house, first say, 'Peace be with this house.' 6 If
a peace-loving man lives there, let your greeting of

peace remain on him; if not, take back your greeting of peace. 7Stay in that same house, eating and drinking what they offer you, because a worker should be given his pay. Don't move around from one house to another. 8Whenever you go into a town and are made welcome, eat what is set before you, 9heal the sick in that town, and say to the people there, 'The Kingdom of God has come near you.' 10But whenever you go into a town and are not welcomed there, go out in the streets and say, 11"Even the dust from your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you; but remember this, the Kingdom of God has come near you!' 12I tell you that on the Judgment Day God will show more mercy to Sodom than to that town!"

The Unbelieving Towns

(Also Matt. 11.20–24)

13"How terrible it will be for you, Chorazin! How terrible for you too, Bethsaida! If the miracles which were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, long ago the people there would have sat down, put on sackcloth, and sprinkled ashes on themselves to show that they had turned from their sins! 14God will show more mercy on the Judgment Day to Tyre and Sidon than to you. 15And as for you, Capernaum! You wanted to lift yourself up to heaven? You will be thrown down to hell!"

16Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever listens to you, listens to me; whoever rejects you, rejects me; and whoever rejects me, rejects the one who sent me."

The Return of the Seventy-two

17The seventy-two men came back in great joy. "Lord," they said, "even the demons obeyed us when we commanded them in your name!"

18Jesus answered them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19Listen! I have given you authority, so that you can walk on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the Enemy, and nothing will hurt you. 20But don't be glad because the evil spirits obey you; rather be glad because your names are written in heaven."

Jesus Rejoices

(Also Matt. 11.25–27; 13.16–17)

21 At that time Jesus was filled with joy by the Holy
Spirit, and said, "Father, Lord of heaven and earth! I
thank you because you have shown to the unlearned
what you have hidden from the wise and learned. Yes,
Father, this was done by your own choice and pleasure.
22 "My Father has given me all things. No one
knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one
knows who the Father is except the Son and those to
whom the Son wants to reveal him."
23 Then Jesus turned to the disciples and said to
them privately, "How fortunate you are, to see the
things you see! 24 Many prophets and kings, I tell you,
wanted to see what you see, but they could not, and to
hear what you hear, but they did not."

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

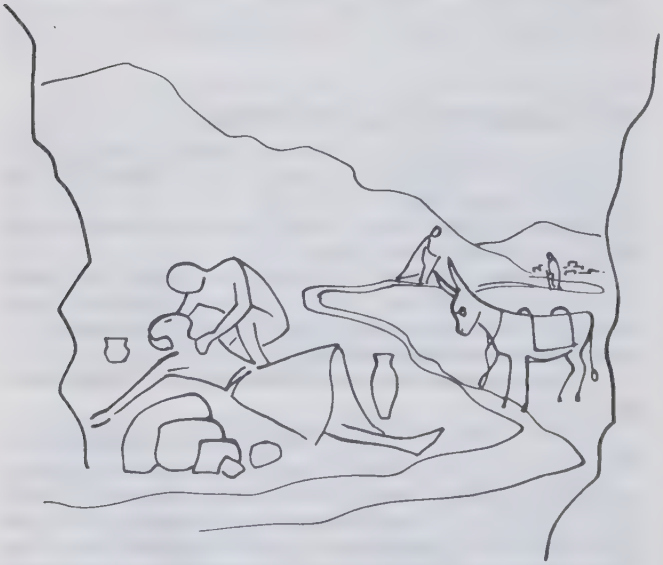
25 A certain teacher of the Law came up and tried to
trap Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to
receive eternal life?"
26 Jesus answered him, "What do the Scriptures say?
How do you interpret them?"
27 The man answered, " 'You must love the Lord your
God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your
strength, and with all your mind'; and, 'You must love
your fellow-man as yourself.' "
28 "Your answer is correct," replied Jesus; "do this and
you will live."
29 But the teacher of the Law wanted to put himself in
the right, so he asked Jesus, "Who is my fellow-man?"
30 Jesus answered, "There was a man who was going
down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when robbers attacked
him, stripped him, and beat him up, leaving him half
dead. 31 It so happened that a priest was going down that
road; when he saw the man he walked on by, on the
other side. 32 In the same way a Levite also came there,
went over and looked at the man, and then walked on
by, on the other side. 33 But a certain Samaritan who was
traveling that way came upon him, and when he saw the

man his heart was filled with pity. [34]He went over to him, poured oil and wine on his wounds and bandaged them; then he put the man on his own animal and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. [35]The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Take care of him,' he told the innkeeper, 'and when I come back this way I will pay you back whatever you spend on him.' "

[36]And Jesus concluded, "In your opinion, which one of these three acted like a fellow-man toward the man attacked by the robbers?"

[37]The teacher of the Law answered, "The one who was kind to him."

Jesus replied, "You go, then, and do the same."



His heart was filled with pity

Jesus Visits Martha and Mary

38 As Jesus and his disciples went on their way, he
came to a certain village where a woman named Martha
welcomed him in her home. 39 She had a sister named
Mary, who sat down at the feet of the Lord and listened
to his teaching. 40 Martha was upset over all the work she
had to do; so she came and said, "Lord, don't you care
that my sister has left me to do all the work by my-
self? Tell her to come and help me!"
41 The Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha! You
are worried and troubled over so many things, 42 but
just one is needed. Mary has chosen the right thing,
and it will not be taken away from her."

Jesus' Teaching on Prayer

(Also Matt. 6.9–13; 7.7–11)

11 One time Jesus was praying in a certain place.
When he finished, one of his disciples said to him,
"Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disci-
ples."
2 Jesus said to them, "This is what you should pray:
'Father:
May your holy name be honored;
may your Kingdom come.
3 Give us day by day the food we need.
4 Forgive us our sins,
because we forgive everyone who
does us wrong.
And do not bring us to hard testing.'"
5 And Jesus said to his disciples, "Suppose one of you
should go to a friend's house at midnight and tell him,
'Friend, let me borrow three loaves of bread. 6 A friend
of mine who is on a trip has just come to my house and
I don't have any food for him!' 7 And suppose your
friend should answer from inside, 'Don't bother me! The
door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed.
I can't get up to give you anything.' 8 Well, what then?
I tell you, even if he will not get up and give you the
bread because he is your friend, yet he will get up and
give you everything you need because you are not
ashamed to keep on asking. 9 And so I say to you: Ask,
and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and

the door will be opened to you. [10]For everyone who asks will receive, and he who seeks will find, and the door will be opened to him who knocks. [11]Would any of you who are fathers give your son a snake when he asks for fish? [12]Or would you give him a scorpion when he asks for an egg? [13]As bad as you are, you know how to give good things to your children. How much more, then, the Father in heaven will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Jesus and Beelzebul

(Also Matt. 12.22–30; Mark 3.20–27)

[14]Jesus was driving out a demon that could not talk; when the demon went out, the man began to talk. The crowds were amazed, [15]but some of the people said, "It is Beelzebul, the chief of the demons, who gives him the power to drive them out."

[16]Others wanted to trap him, so they asked him to perform a miracle to show God's approval. [17]But Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Any country that divides itself into groups that fight each other will not last very long; a family divided against itself falls apart. [18]So if Satan's kingdom has groups fighting each other, how can it last? You say that I drive out demons because Beelzebul gives me the power to do so. [19]If this is how I drive them out, how do your followers drive them out? Your own followers prove that you are wrong! [20]No, it is rather by means of God's power that I drive out demons, which proves that the Kingdom of God has already come to you.

[21]"When a strong man, with all his weapons ready, guards his own house, all his belongings are safe. [22]But when a stronger man attacks him and defeats him, he carries away all the weapons the owner was depending on and divides up what he stole.

[23]"Anyone who is not for me is really against me; anyone who does not help me gather is really scattering."

The Return of the Evil Spirit

(Also Matt. 12.43–45)

[24]"When an evil spirit goes out of a man, it travels over dry country looking for a place to rest. If it can't

find one, it says to itself, 'I will go back to my house which I left.' [25]So it goes back and finds the house clean and all fixed up. [26]Then it goes out and brings seven other spirits even worse than itself, and they come and live there. So that man is in worse shape, when it is all over, than he was at the beginning."

True Happiness

[27]When Jesus had said this, a woman spoke up from the crowd and said to him, "How happy is the woman who bore you and nursed you!"

[28]But Jesus answered, "Rather, how happy are those who hear the word of God and obey it!"

The Demand for a Miracle

(Also Matt. 12.38–42)

[29]As the people crowded around Jesus he went on to say, "How evil are the people of this day! They ask for a miracle, but none will be given them except the miracle of Jonah. [30]In the same way that the prophet Jonah was a sign for the people of Nineveh, so the Son of Man will be a sign for the people of this day. [31]On the Judgment Day the Queen from the South will stand up and accuse the people of today, because she traveled halfway around the world to listen to Solomon's wise teaching; and there is something here, I tell you, greater than Solomon. [32]On the Judgment Day the people of Nineveh will stand up and accuse you, because they turned from their sins when they heard Jonah preach; and there is something here, I tell you, greater than Jonah!"

The Light of the Body

(Also Matt. 5.15; 6.22–23)

[33]"No one lights a lamp and then hides it or puts it under a bowl; instead, he puts it on the lampstand, so that people may see the light as they come in. [34]Your eyes are like a lamp for the body. When your eyes are clear your whole body is full of light; but when your eyes are bad your whole body will be in darkness. [35]Be careful, then, that the light in you is not darkness. [36]If, then, your whole body is full of light, with no part of it in

darkness, it will be bright all over, as when a lamp shines on you with its brightness."

Jesus Accuses the Pharisees and the Teachers of the Law

(Also Matt. 23.1–36; Mark 12.38–40)

37 When Jesus finished speaking, a Pharisee invited
him to eat with him; so he went in and sat down to eat.
38 The Pharisee was surprised when he noticed that Jesus
had not washed before eating. 39 So the Lord said to him,
"Now, then, you Pharisees clean the cup and plate on
the outside, but inside you are full of violence and evil.
40 Fools! Did not God, who made the outside, also make
the inside? 41 But give what is in your cups and plates to
the poor, and everything will be clean for you.

42 "How terrible for you, Pharisees! You give to God
one tenth of the seasoning herbs, such as mint and rue
and all the other herbs, but you neglect justice and love
for God. These you should practice, without neglecting
the others.

43 "How terrible for you, Pharisees! You love the re-
served seats in the synagogues, and to be greeted with
respect in the market places. 44 How terrible for you!
You are like unmarked graves which people walk on
without knowing it."

45 One of the teachers of the Law said to him,
"Teacher, when you say this you insult us too!"

46 Jesus answered,
"How terrible for you,
too, teachers of the
Law! You put loads
on men's backs which
are hard to carry, but
you yourselves will not
stretch out a finger to
help them carry those
loads. 47 How terrible
for you! You make
fine tombs for the
prophets—the very
prophets your ances-
tors murdered. 48 You

You put loads on men's backs

yourselves admit, then, that you approve of what your

ancestors did; because they murdered the prophets,
and you build their tombs. [49]For this reason the
Wisdom of God said, 'I will send them prophets and
messengers; they will kill some of them and persecute
others.' [50]So the people of this time will be punished for
the murder of all the prophets killed since the creation
of the world, [51]from the murder of Abel to the murder
of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the
holy place. Yes, I tell you, the people of this time will
be punished for them all!

[52]"How terrible for you, teachers of the Law! You
have kept the key that opens the door to the house of
knowledge; you yourselves will not go in, and you stop
those who are trying to go in!"

[53]When Jesus left that place the teachers of the Law
and the Pharisees began to criticize him bitterly and
ask him questions about many things, [54]trying to lay
traps for him and catch him in something wrong he
might say.

A Warning against Hypocrisy

(Also Matt. 10.26–27)

12 As thousands of people crowded together, so that
they were stepping on each other, Jesus said first
to his disciples, "Be on guard against the yeast of the
Pharisees—I mean their hypocrisy. [2]Whatever is cov-
ered up will be uncovered, and every secret will be made
known. [3]So then, whatever you have said in the dark will
be heard in broad daylight, and whatever you have whis-
pered in men's ears in a closed room will be shouted
from the housetops."

Whom to Fear

(Also Matt. 10.28–31)

[4]"I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who
kill the body but cannot afterward do anything worse.
[5]I will show you whom to fear: fear God who, after
killing, has the authority to throw into hell. Yes, I tell
you, be afraid of him!

[6]"Aren't five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not
a single one of them is forgotten by God. [7]Even the hairs
of your head have all been numbered. So do not be
afraid; you are worth much more than many sparrows!"

Confessing and Denying Christ

(Also Matt. 10.32–33; 12.32; 10.19–20)

8"I tell you: whoever declares publicly that he belongs
to me, the Son of Man will do the same for him before
the angels of God; 9but whoever denies publicly that he
belongs to me, the Son of Man will also deny him before
the angels of God.
10"Anyone who says a word against the Son of Man
can be forgiven; but the one who says evil things against
the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.
11"When they bring you to be tried in the synagogues,
or before governors or rulers, do not be worried about
how you will defend yourself or what you will say. 12For
the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you
should say."

The Parable of the Rich Fool

13A man in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my
brother to divide with me the property our father left
us."
14Jesus answered him, "Man, who gave me the right
to judge, or to divide the property between you two?"
15And he went on to say to them all, "Watch out, and
guard yourselves from all kinds of greed; because a
man's true life is not made up of the things he owns, no
matter how rich he may be."
16Then Jesus told them this parable, "A rich man had
land which bore good crops. 17He began to think to
himself, 'I don't have a place to keep all my crops. What
can I do? 18This is what I will do,' he told himself; 'I will
tear my barns down and build bigger ones, where I will
store the grain and all my other goods. 19Then I will say
to myself, Lucky man! You have all the good things you
need for many years. Take life easy, eat, drink, and
enjoy yourself!' 20But God said to him, 'You fool! This
very night you will have to give up your life; then who
will get all these things you have kept for yourself?' "
21And Jesus concluded, "This is how it is with those
who pile up riches for themselves but are not rich in
God's sight."

Trust in God
(Also Matt. 6.25–34)

22 Then Jesus said to the disciples, "This is why I tell
you: do not be worried about the food you need to stay
alive, or about the clothes you need for your body. 23 Life
is much more important than food, and body much
more important than clothes. 24 Look at the crows: they
don't plant seeds or gather a harvest; they don't have

Do not be worried

storage rooms or barns; God feeds them! You are worth
so much more than birds! 25 Which one of you can live
a few more years by worrying about it? 26 If you can't
manage even such a small thing, why worry about the
other things? 27 Look how the wild flowers grow: they
don't work or make clothes for themselves. But I tell
you that not even Solomon, as rich as he was, had
clothes as beautiful as one of these flowers. 28 It is God
who clothes the wild grass—grass that is here today,
gone tomorrow, burned up in the oven. Won't he be all
the more sure to clothe you? How little faith you have!
29 So don't be all upset, always concerned about what
you will eat and drink. 30 (For the heathen of this world
are always concerned about all these things.) Your
Father knows that you need these things. 31 Instead, be
concerned with his Kingdom, and he will provide you
with these things."

Riches in Heaven

(Also Matt. 6.19–21)

32"Do not be afraid, little flock; because your Father
is pleased to give you the Kingdom. 33Sell all your be-
longings and give the money to the poor. Provide for
yourselves purses that don't wear out, and save your
riches in heaven, where they will never decrease, be-
cause no thief can get to them, no moth can destroy
them. 34For your heart will always be where your riches
are."

Watchful Servants

35"Be ready for whatever comes, with your clothes
fastened tight at the waist and your lamps lit, 36like
servants who are waiting for their master to come back
from a wedding feast. When he comes and knocks, they
will open the door for him at once. 37How happy are
those servants whose master finds them awake and
ready when he returns! I tell you, he will fasten his belt,
have them sit down, and wait on them. 38How happy are
they if he finds them ready, even if he should come as
late as midnight or even later! 39And remember this! If
the man of the house knew the time when the thief
would come, he would not let the thief break into his
house. 40And you, too, be ready, because the Son of
Man will come at an hour when you are not expecting
him."

The Faithful or the Unfaithful Servant

(Also Matt. 24.45–51)

41Peter said, "Lord, are you telling this parable to us,
or do you mean it for everyone?"

42The Lord answered, "Who, then, is the faithful and
wise servant? He is the one whom his master will put in
charge, to run the household and give the other servants
their share of the food at the proper time. 43How happy
is that servant if his master finds him doing this when
he comes home! 44Indeed, I tell you, the master will put
that servant in charge of all his property. 45But if that
servant says to himself, 'My master is taking a long time
to come back,' and begins to beat the other servants,
both the men and the women, and eats and drinks and

gets drunk, [46]then the master will come back some day when the servant does not expect him and at a time he does not know. The master will cut him to pieces, and make him share the fate of the disobedient.

[47]"The servant who knows what his master wants him to do, but does not get himself ready and do what his master wants, will be punished with a heavy whipping; [48]but the servant who does not know what his master wants, and does something for which he deserves a whipping, will be punished with a light whipping. The man to whom much is given, of him much is required; the man to whom more is given, of him much more is required."

Jesus the Cause of Division

(Also Matt. 10.34–36)

[49]"I came to set the earth on fire; how I wish it were already kindled! [50]I have a baptism to receive; how distressed I am until it is over! [51]Do you suppose that I came to bring peace to the world? Not peace, I tell you, but division. [52]From now on a family of five will be divided, three against two, two against three. [53]Fathers will be against their sons, and sons against their fathers; mothers will be against their daughters, and daughters against their mothers; mothers-in-law will be against their daughters-in-law, and daughters-in-law against their mothers-in-law."

Understanding the Time

(Also Matt. 16.2–3)

[54]Jesus said also to the people, "When you see a cloud coming up in the west, at once you say, 'It is going to rain,' and it does. [55]And when you feel the south wind blowing, you say, 'It is going to get hot,' and it does. [56]Hypocrites! You can look at the earth and the sky and tell what it means; why, then, don't you know the meaning of this present time?"

Settle with Your Opponent

(Also Matt. 5.25–26)

[57]"Why do you not judge for yourselves the right thing to do? [58]If a man brings a lawsuit against you and takes you to court, do your best to settle the matter with

him while you are on the way, so that he won't drag you before the judge, and the judge hand you over to the police, and the police put you in jail. [59]You will not come out of there, I tell you, until you pay the last penny of your fine."

Turn from Your Sins or Die

13 At that time some people were there who told Jesus about the Galileans whom Pilate had killed while they were offering sacrifices to God. [2]Jesus answered them, "Because these Galileans were killed in that way, do you think it proves that they were worse sinners than all the other Galileans? [3]No! I tell you that if you do not turn from your sins, you will all die as they did. [4]What about those eighteen in Siloam who were killed when the tower fell on them? Do you suppose this proves that they were worse than all the other people living in Jerusalem? [5]No! I tell you that if you do not turn from your sins, you will all die as they did."

The Parable of the Unfruitful Fig Tree

[6]Then Jesus told them this parable, "A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard. He went looking for figs on it but found none. [7]So he said to his gardener, 'Look, for three years I have been coming here looking for figs on this fig tree and I haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it go on using up the soil?' [8]But the gardener answered, 'Leave it alone, sir, just this one year; I will dig a trench around it and fill it up with fertilizer. [9]Then if the tree bears figs next year, so much the better; if not, then you will have it cut down.' "

Jesus Heals a Crippled Woman on the Sabbath

[10]One Sabbath day Jesus was teaching in a synagogue. [11]A woman was there who had an evil spirit in her that had kept her sick for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not straighten up at all. [12]When Jesus saw her he called out to her, "Woman, you are free from your sickness!" [13]He placed his hands on her and at once she straightened herself up and praised God.

[14]The official of the synagogue was angry that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; so he spoke up and said to the people, "There are six days in which we should

Give it water on the Sabbath

work; so come during those days and be healed, but not on the Sabbath!"

15The Lord answered him by saying, "You hypocrites! Any one of you would untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and take it out to give it water on the Sabbath. 16Now here is this descendant of Abraham whom Satan has kept in bonds for eighteen years; should she not be freed from her bonds on the Sabbath?" 17His answer made all his enemies ashamed of themselves, while all the people rejoiced over every wonderful thing that he did.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

(Also Matt. 13.31–32; Mark 4.30–32)

18Jesus asked, "What is the Kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it with? 19It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field; the plant grew and became a tree, and the birds made their nests in its branches."

The Parable of the Yeast

(Also Matt. 13.33)

20Again Jesus asked, "What shall I compare the Kingdom of God with? 21It is like the yeast which a woman takes and mixes in a bushel of flour, until the whole batch of dough rises."

The Narrow Door

(Also Matt. 7.13–14, 21–23)

22Jesus went through towns and villages, teaching and making his way toward Jerusalem. 23Someone asked him, "Sir, will just a few people be saved?"

Jesus answered them, 24"Do your best to go in through the narrow door; because many people, I tell you, will try to go in but will not be able. 25The master of the house will get up and close the door; then when you stand outside and begin to knock on the door and

say, 'Open the door for us, sir!' he will answer you, 'I don't know where you come from!' [26]Then you will answer back, 'We ate and drank with you; you taught in our town!' [27]He will say again, 'I don't know where you come from. Get away from me, all you evildoers!' [28]What crying and gnashing of teeth there will be when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God, while you are thrown out! [29]People will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit at the table in the Kingdom of God. [30]Then those who are now last will be first, and those who are now first will be last."

Jesus' Love for Jerusalem

(Also Matt. 23.37-39)

[31]At that same time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to him, "You must get out of here and go somewhere else, because Herod wants to kill you."

[32]Jesus answered them, "Go tell that fox: 'I am driving out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I shall finish my work.' [33]Yet I must be on my way today, tomorrow, and the next day; it is not right for a prophet to be killed anywhere except in Jerusalem.

[34]"Jerusalem, Jerusalem! You kill the prophets, you stone the messengers God has sent you! How many times I wanted to put my arms around all your people, just as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you would not let me! [35]Now your home will be completely forsaken. You will not see me, I tell you, until the time comes when you say, 'God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Jesus Heals a Sick Man

14 One Sabbath day Jesus went to eat a meal at the home of one of the leading Pharisees; and people were watching Jesus closely. [2]A man whose legs and arms were swollen came to Jesus, [3]and Jesus spoke up and asked the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees, "Does our Law allow healing on the Sabbath, or not?"

[4]But they would not say a thing. Jesus took the man, healed him, and sent him away. [5]Then he said to them, "If any one of you had a son or an ox that happened to

fall in a well on a Sabbath, would you not pull him out at once on the Sabbath itself?"

[6]But they were not able to answer him about this.

Humility and Hospitality

[7]Jesus noticed how some of the guests were choosing the best places, so he told this parable to all of them, [8]"When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place. It could happen that someone more important than you had been invited, [9]and your host, who invited both of you, would come and say to you, 'Let him have this place.' Then you would be ashamed and have to sit in the lowest place. [10]Instead, when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that your host will come to you and say, 'Come on up, my friend, to a better place.' This will bring you honor in the presence of all the other guests. [11]Because everyone who makes himself great will be humbled, and everyone who humbles himself will be made great."

[12]Then Jesus said to his host, "When you give a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends, or your brothers, or your relatives, or your rich neighbors—because they will invite you back and in this way you will be paid for what you did. [13]When you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind, [14]and you will be blessed; because they are not able to pay you back. You will be paid by God when the good people rise from death."

The Parable of the Great Feast

(Also Matt. 22.1–10)

[15]One of the men sitting at the table heard this and said to Jesus, "How happy are those who will sit at the table in the Kingdom of God!"

[16]Jesus said to him, "There was a man who was giving a great feast, to which he invited many people. [17]At the time for the feast he sent his servant to tell his guests, 'Come, everything is ready!' [18]But they all began, one after another, to make excuses. The first one told the servant, 'I bought a field, and have to go and look at it; please accept my apologies.' [19]Another one said, 'I bought five pairs of oxen and am on my way to try them

out; please accept my apologies.' [20]Another one said, 'I have just gotten married, and for this reason I cannot come.' [21]The servant went back and told all this to his master. The master of the house was furious and said to his servant, 'Hurry out to the streets and alleys of the town, and bring back the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.' [22]Soon the servant said, 'Your order has been carried out, sir, but there is room for more.' [23]So the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the country roads and lanes, and make people come in, so that my house will be full. [24]I tell you all that none of those men who were invited will taste my dinner!' "

The Cost of Being a Disciple

(Also Matt. 10.37–38)

[25]Great crowds of people were going along with Jesus. He turned and said to them, [26]"Whoever comes to me cannot be my disciple unless he hates his father and his mother, his wife and his children, his brothers and his sisters, and himself as well. [27]Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. [28]If one of you is planning to build a tower, he sits down first and figures out what it will cost, to see if he has enough money to finish the job. [29]If he doesn't, he will not be able to finish the tower after laying the foundation; and all who see what happened will make fun of him. [30]'This man began to build but can't finish the job!' they will say. [31]If a king goes out with ten thousand men to fight another king, who comes against him with twenty thousand men, he will sit down first and decide if he is strong enough to face that other king. [32]If he isn't, he will send messengers to meet the other king, while he is still a long way off, to ask for terms of peace. [33]In the same way," concluded Jesus, "none of you can be my disciple unless he gives up everything he has."

Worthless Salt

(Also Matt. 5.13; Mark 9.50)

[34]"Salt is good, but if it loses its taste there is no way to make it salty again. [35]It is no good for the soil or for the manure pile; it is thrown away. Listen, then, if you have ears!"

The Lost Sheep

(Also Matt. 18.12-14)

15 One time many tax collectors and outcasts came to listen to Jesus. 2The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law started grumbling, "This man welcomes outcasts and even eats with them!" 3So Jesus told them this parable.

4"Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them –what does he do? He leaves the other ninety-nine sheep in the pasture and goes looking for the one that got lost until he finds it. 5When he finds it, he is so happy that he puts it on his shoulders, 6and carries it back home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together, and says to them, 'I am so happy I found my lost sheep. Let us celebrate!' 7In the same way, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine respectable people who do not need to repent."

The Lost Coin

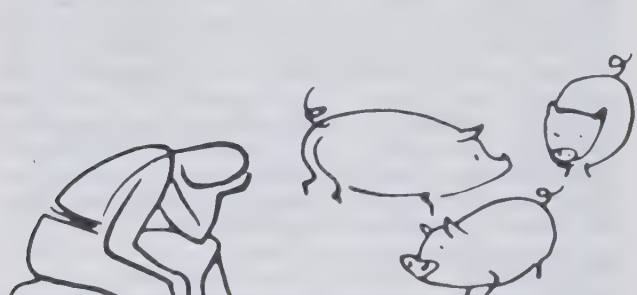
8"Or suppose a woman who has ten silver coins loses one of them—what does she do? She lights a lamp, sweeps her house, and looks carefully everywhere until she finds it. 9When she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, and says to them, 'I am so happy I found the coin I lost. Let us celebrate!' 10In the same way, I tell you, the angels of God rejoice over one sinner who repents."

The Lost Son

11Jesus went on to say, "There was a man who had two sons. 12The younger one said to him, 'Father, give me now my share of the property.' So the man divided the property between his two sons. 13After a few days the younger son sold his part of the property and left home with the

Left home with the money

money. He went to a country far away, where he wasted his money in reckless living. [14]He spent everything he had. Then a severe famine spread over that country, and he was left without a thing. [15]So he went to work for one of the citizens of that country, who sent him out to his farm to take care of the pigs. [16]He wished he could fill himself with the bean pods the pigs ate, but no one gave him anything to eat. [17]At last he came to his senses



Here I am, about to starve!

and said, 'All my father's hired workers have more than they can eat, and here I am, about to starve! [18]I will get up and go to my father and say, "Father, I have sinned against God and against you. [19]I am no longer fit to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired workers." ' [20]So he got up and started back to his father.

"He was still a long way from home when his father saw him; his heart was filled with pity and he ran, threw his arms around his son, and kissed him. [21]'Father,' the son said, 'I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son.' [22]But the father called his servants: 'Hurry!' he said. 'Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet. [23]Then go get the prize calf and kill it, and let us celebrate with a feast! [24]Because this son of mine was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has

been found.' And so the feasting began.

[25]"The older son, in the meantime, was out in the field. On his way back, when he came close to the house, he heard the music and dancing. [26]He called one of the servants and asked him, 'What's going on?' [27]'Your brother came back home,' the servant answered, 'and your father killed the prize calf, because he got him back safe and sound.' [28]The older brother was so angry that he would not go into the house; so his father came out and begged him to come in. [29]'Look,' he answered back to his father, 'all these years I have worked like a slave for you, and I never disobeyed your orders. What have you given me? Not even a goat for me to have a feast with my friends! [30]But this son of yours wasted all your property on prostitutes, and when he comes back home you kill the prize calf for him!' [31]'My son,' the father answered, 'you are always here with me and everything I have is yours. [32]But we had to have a feast and be happy, because your brother was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found.' "

He has been found

The Shrewd Manager

16 Jesus said to his disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and he was told that the manager was wasting his master's money. [2]He called him in and said, 'What is this I hear about you? Turn in a complete account of your handling of my property, because you cannot be my manager any longer.' [3]'My master is going to dismiss me from my job,' the man said to himself. 'What shall I do? I am not strong enough to dig ditches, and I am ashamed to beg. [4]Now I know what I will do! Then when my job is gone I shall have

friends who will welcome me in their homes.' 'So he called in all the people who were in debt to his master. He said to the first one, 'How much do you owe my master?' 6"One hundred barrels of olive oil,' he answered. 'Here is your account,' the manager told him; 'sit down and write fifty.' 7He said to another one, 'And you — how much do you owe?' 'A thousand bushels of wheat,' he answered. 'Here is your account,' the manager told him; 'write eight hundred.' 8The master of this dishonest manager praised him for doing such a shrewd thing; because the people of this world are much more shrewd in handling their affairs than the people who belong to the light."

9And Jesus went on to say, "And so I tell you: make friends for yourselves with worldly wealth, so that when it gives out you will be welcomed in the eternal home. 10Whoever is faithful in small matters will be faithful in large ones; whoever is dishonest in small matters will be dishonest in large ones. 11If, then, you have not been faithful in handling worldly wealth, how can you be trusted with true wealth? 12And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to someone else, who will give you what belongs to you?

13"No servant can be the slave of two masters; he will hate one and love the other; he will be loyal to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

Some Sayings of Jesus

(Also Matt. 11.12–13; 5.31–32; Mark 10.11–12)

14The Pharisees heard all this, and they made fun of Jesus, because they loved money. 15Jesus said to them, "You are the ones who make yourselves look right in men's sight, but God knows your hearts. For what men think is of great value is worth nothing in God's sight.

16"The Law of Moses and the writings of the prophets were in effect up to the time of John the Baptist; since then the Good News about the Kingdom of God is being told, and everyone forces his way in. 17But it is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for the smallest detail of the Law to be done away with.

18"Any man who divorces his wife and marries an-

other woman commits adultery; and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery."

The Rich Man and Lazarus

19"There was once a rich man who dressed in the most expensive clothes and lived in great luxury every day. 20There was also a poor man, named Lazarus, full of sores, who used to be brought to the rich man's door, 21hoping to fill himself with the bits of food that fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs would come and lick his sores. 22The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side, at the feast in heaven; the rich man died and was buried. 23He was in great pain in Hades; and he looked up and saw Abraham, far away, with Lazarus at his side. 24So he called out, 'Father Abraham! Take pity on me, and send Lazarus to dip his finger in some water and cool off my tongue, because I am in great pain in this fire!' 25But Abraham said, 'Remember, my son, that in your lifetime you were given all the good things, while Lazarus got all the bad things; but now he is enjoying himself here, while you are in pain. 26Besides all that, there is a deep pit lying between us, so that those who want to cross over from here to you cannot do it, nor can anyone cross over to us from where you are.' 27The rich man said, 'Well, father, I beg you, send Lazarus to my father's house, 28where I have five brothers; let him go and warn them so that they, at least, will not come to this place of pain.' 29Abraham said, 'Your brothers have Moses and the prophets to warn them; let your brothers listen to what they say.' 30The rich man answered, 'That is not enough, father Abraham! But if someone were to rise from death and go to them, then they would turn from their sins.' 31But Abraham said, 'If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone were to rise from death.' "

Sin

(Also Matt. 18.6–7, 21–22; Mark 9.42)

17 Jesus said to his disciples, "Things that make people fall into sin are bound to happen; but how terrible for the one who makes them happen! 2It would

be better for him if a large millstone were tied around his neck and he were thrown into the sea, than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin. [3]Be on your guard!

"If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. [4]If he sins against you seven times in one day, and each time he comes to you saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him."

Faith

[5]The apostles said to the Lord, "Make our faith greater."

[6]The Lord answered, "If you had faith as big as a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Pull yourself up by the roots and plant yourself in the sea!' and it would obey you."

A Servant's Duty

[7]"Suppose one of you has a servant who is plowing or looking after the sheep. When he comes in from the field, do you say to him, 'Hurry along and eat your meal'? [8]Of course not! Instead, you say to him, 'Get my supper ready, then put on your apron and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink.' [9]The servant does not deserve thanks for obeying orders, does he? [10]It is the same with you; when you have done all you have been told to do, say, 'We are ordinary servants; we have only done our duty.'"

Jesus Makes Ten Lepers Clean

[11]As Jesus made his way to Jerusalem he went between Samaria and Galilee. [12]He was going into a village when he was met by ten lepers. They stood at a distance [13]and shouted, "Jesus! Master! Have pity on us!"

[14]Jesus saw them and said to them, "Go and let the priests examine you."

On the way they were made clean. [15]One of them, when he saw that he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. [16]He threw himself to the ground at Jesus' feet, thanking him. The man was a Samaritan. [17]Jesus spoke up, "There were ten men made clean;

where are the other nine? [18]Why is this foreigner the only one who came back to give thanks to God?" [19]And Jesus said to him, "Get up and go; your faith has made you well."

Where are the other nine?

The Coming of the Kingdom
(Also Matt. 24.23–28, 37–41)

[20]Some Pharisees asked Jesus when the Kingdom of God would come. His answer was, "The Kingdom of God does not come in such a way as to be seen. [21]No one will say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!'; because the Kingdom of God is within you."

[22]Then he said to the disciples, "The time will come when you will wish you could see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it. [23]There will be those who will say to you, 'Look, over there!' or, 'Look, over here!' But don't go out looking for it. [24]As the lightning flashes across the sky and lights it up from one side to

the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day. [25]But first
he must suffer much and be rejected by the people of this
day. [26]As it was in the time of Noah, so shall it be in the
days of the Son of Man. [27]Everybody kept on eating and
drinking, men and women married, up to the very day
Noah went into the ark and the Flood came and killed
them all. [28]It will be as it was in the time of Lot. Every-
body kept on eating and drinking, buying and selling,
planting and building. [29]On the day Lot left Sodom, fire
and sulfur rained down from heaven and killed them
all. [30]That is how it will be on the day the Son of Man
is revealed.

[31]"The man who is on the roof of his house on that day
must not go down into the house to get his belongings
that are there; in the same way, the man who is out in the
field must not go back to the house. [32]Remember Lot's
wife! [33]Whoever tries to save his own life will lose it;
whoever loses his life will save it. [34]On that night, I tell
you, there will be two men sleeping in one bed: one will
be taken away, the other left behind. [35]Two women will
be grinding meal together: one will be taken away, the
other left behind. [[36]Two men will be in the field: one will
be taken away, the other left behind.]"

[37]The disciples asked him, "Where, Lord?"

Jesus answered, "Where there is a dead body the vul-
tures will gather."

The Parable of the Widow and the Judge

18 Then Jesus told them this parable, to teach them
that they should always pray and never become
discouraged. [2]"There was a judge in a certain town who
neither feared God nor respected men. [3]And there was a
widow in that same town who kept coming to him and
pleading for her rights: 'Help me against my opponent!'
[4]For a long time the judge was not willing, but at last he
said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or respect
men, [5]yet because of all the trouble this widow is giving
me I will see to it that she gets her rights; or else she will
keep on coming and finally wear me out!' "

[6]And the Lord continued, "Listen to what that cor-
rupt judge said. [7]Now, will God not judge in favor of his
own people who cry to him for help day and night? Will

he be slow to help them? 8I tell you, he will judge in their favor, and do it quickly. But will the Son of Man find faith on earth when he comes?"

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

9Jesus also told this parable to people who were sure of their own goodness and despised everybody else. 10"Two men went up to the temple to pray; one was a Pharisee, the other a tax collector. 11The Pharisee stood apart by himself and prayed, 'I thank you, God, that I am not greedy, dishonest, or immoral, like everybody else; I thank you that I am not like that tax collector. 12I fast two days every week, and I give you one tenth of all my income.' 13But the tax collector stood at a distance and would not even raise his face to heaven, but beat on his breast and said, 'God, have pity on me, a sinner!' 14I tell you," said Jesus, "this man, and not the other, was in the right with God when he went home. Because everyone who makes himself great will be humbled, and everyone who humbles himself will be made great."

Jesus Blesses Little Children

(Also Matt. 19.13-15; Mark 10.13-16)

15Some people brought their babies to Jesus to have him place his hands on them. But the disciples saw them and scolded them for doing so. 16But Jesus called the children to him, and said, "Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 17Remember this! Whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it."

The Rich Man

(Also Matt. 19.16–30; Mark 10.17–31)

18A Jewish leader asked Jesus, "Good Teacher, what must I do to receive eternal life?"

19"Why do you call me good?" Jesus asked him. "No one is good except God alone. 20You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery; do not murder; do not steal; do not lie; honor your father and mother.' "

21 The man replied, "Ever since I was young I have
obeyed all these commandments."
22 When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still
need to do one thing. Sell all you have and give the
money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven;
then come and follow me." 23 But when the man heard
this he became very sad, because he was very rich.
24 Jesus saw that he was sad and said, "How hard it
is for rich people to enter the Kingdom of God! 25 It is
much harder for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of
God than for a camel to go through the eye of a nee-
dle."
26 The people who heard him asked, "Who, then, can
be saved?"
27 Jesus answered, "What is impossible for men is
possible for God."
28 Then Peter said, "Look! We have left our homes
to follow you."
29 "Yes," Jesus said to them, "and I tell you this:
anyone who leaves home or wife or brothers or parents
or children for the sake of the Kingdom of God 30 will
receive much more in this present age, and eternal life
in the age to come."

Jesus Speaks a Third Time about His Death

(Also Matt. 20.17–19; Mark 10.32–34)

31 Jesus took the twelve disciples aside and said to
them, "Listen! We are going to Jerusalem where every-
thing the prophets wrote about the Son of Man will
come true. 32 He will be handed over to the Gentiles,
who will make fun of him, insult him, and spit on him.
33 They will whip him and kill him, but on the third day
he will rise to life."
34 The disciples did not understand any of these
things; the meaning of the words was hidden from them,
and they did not know what Jesus was talking about.

Jesus Heals a Blind Beggar

(Also Matt. 20.29–34; Mark 10.46–52)

35 Jesus was coming near Jericho, and a certain blind
man was sitting by the road, begging. 36 When he heard
the crowd passing by he asked, "What is this?"
37 "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by," they told him.

38 He cried out, "Jesus! Son of David! Have mercy on
me!"
39 The people in front scolded him and told him to be
quiet. But he shouted even more loudly, "Son of Da-
vid! Have mercy on me!"
40 So Jesus stopped and ordered that the blind man
be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked
him, 41 "What do you want me to do for you?"
"Sir," he answered, "I want to see again."
42 Then Jesus said to him, "See! Your faith has made
you well."
43 At once he was able to see, and he followed Jesus,
giving thanks to God. When the crowd saw it, they all
praised God.

Jesus and Zacchaeus

19 Jesus went on into Jericho and was passing
through. 2 There was a chief tax collector there,
named Zacchaeus, who was rich. 3 He was trying to see

He was a little man

who Jesus was, but he was a little man and could not see Jesus because of the crowd. 4So he ran ahead of the crowd and climbed a sycamore tree to see Jesus, who would be going that way. 5When Jesus came to that place, he looked up and said to Zacchaeus, "Hurry down, Zacchaeus, because I must stay in your house today."

6Zacchaeus hurried down and welcomed him with great joy. 7All the people who saw it started grumbling, "This man has gone as a guest to the home of a sinner!"

8Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Listen, sir! I will give half my belongings to the poor; and if I have cheated anyone, I will pay him back four times as much."

9Jesus said to him, "Salvation has come to this house today; this man, also, is a descendant of Abraham. 10For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

The Parable of the Gold Coins

(Also Matt. 25.14–30)

11While the people were listening to this, Jesus continued and told them a parable. He was now almost at Jerusalem, and they supposed that the Kingdom of God was just about to appear. 12So he said, "There was a nobleman who went to a country far away to be made king and then come back home. 13Before he left, he called his ten servants and gave them each a gold coin and told them, 'See what you can earn with this while I am gone.' 14Now, his countrymen hated him, and so they sent messengers after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.'

15"The nobleman was made king and came back. At once he ordered his servants, to whom he had given the money, to appear before him in order to find out how much they had earned. 16The first one came and said, 'Sir, I have earned ten gold coins with the one you gave me.' 17'Well done,' he said; 'you are a good servant! Since you were faithful in small matters, I will put you in charge of ten cities.' 18The second servant came and said, 'Sir, I have earned five gold coins with the one you gave me.' 19To this one he said, 'You will be in charge of five cities.' 20Another servant came and said, 'Sir, here is your gold coin; I kept it hidden in a handkerchief. 21I was afraid of you, because you are a

hard man. You take what is not yours, and reap what you did not plant.' [22]He said to him, 'You bad servant! I will use your own words to condemn you! You know that I am a hard man, taking what is not mine and reaping what I have not planted. [23]Well, then, why didn't you put my money in the bank? Then I would have received it back with interest when I returned.' [24]Then he said to those who were standing there, 'Take the gold coin away from him and give it to the servant who has ten coins.' [25]They said to him, 'Sir, he already has ten coins!' [26]'I tell you,' he replied, 'that to every one who has, even more will be given; but the one who does not have, even the little that he has will be taken away from him. [27]Now, as for these enemies of mine who did not want me to be their king: bring them here and kill them before me!' "

The Master needs it

The Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem
(Also Matt. 21.1–11; Mark 11.1–11; John 12.12–19)

[28]Jesus said this and then went on to Jerusalem ahead of them. [29]As he came near Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, he sent two disciples ahead [30]with

these instructions, "Go to the village there ahead of you; as you go in you will find a colt tied up that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. [31]If someone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' tell him, 'The Master needs it.'"

[32]They went on their way and found everything just as Jesus had told them. [33]As they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying it?"

[34]"The Master needs it," they answered, [35]and took the colt to Jesus. Then they threw their cloaks over the animal and helped Jesus get on. [36]As he rode on, they spread their cloaks on the road.

[37]When he came near Jerusalem, at the place where the road went down the Mount of Olives, the large crowd of his disciples began to thank God and praise him in loud voices for all the great things that they had seen: [38]"God bless the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory to God!"

[39]Then some of the Pharisees spoke up from the crowd to Jesus. "Teacher," they said, "command your disciples to be quiet!"

[40]Jesus answered, "If they keep quiet, I tell you, the stones themselves will shout."

Jesus Weeps over Jerusalem

[41]He came closer to the city and when he saw it he wept over it, [42]saying, "If you only knew today what is needed for peace! But now you cannot see it! [43]The days will come upon you when your enemies will surround you with barricades, blockade you, and close in on you from every side. [44]They will completely destroy you and the people within your walls; not a single stone will they leave in its place, because you did not recognize the time when God came to save you!"

Jesus Goes to the Temple

(Also Matt. 21.12–17; Mark 11.15–19; John 2.13–22)

[45]Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out the merchants, [46]saying to them, "It is written in the Scriptures that God said, 'My house will be called a house of prayer.' But you have turned it into a hideout for thieves!"

God bless the king who comes in the name of the Lord!

47 Jesus taught in the temple every day. The chief
priests, the teachers of the Law, and the leaders of the
people wanted to kill him, 48 but they could not find how
to do it, because all the people kept listening to him, not
wanting to miss a single word.

The Question about Jesus' Authority

(Also Matt. 21.23–27; Mark 11.27–33)

20 One day, when Jesus was in the temple teaching the people and preaching the Good News, the chief priests and the teachers of the Law, together with the elders, came [2]and said to him, "Tell us, what right do you have to do these things? Who gave you the right to do them?"

[3]Jesus answered them, "Now let me ask you a question. Tell me, [4]did John's right to baptize come from God or from men?"

[5]They started to argue among themselves, "What shall we say? If we say, 'From God,' he will say, 'Why, then, did you not believe John?' [6]But if we say, 'From men,' this whole crowd here will stone us, because they are convinced that John was a prophet." [7]So they answered, "We don't know where it came from."

[8]And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you, then, by what right I do these things."

The Parable of the Tenants in the Vineyard

(Also Matt. 21.33–46; Mark 12.1–12)

[9]Then Jesus told the people this parable, "A man planted a vineyard, rented it out to tenants, and then left home for a long time. [10]When the time came for harvesting the grapes, he sent a slave to the tenants to receive from them his share of the harvest. But the tenants beat the slave and sent him back without a thing. [11]So he sent another slave; but the tenants beat him also, treated him shamefully, and sent him back without a thing. [12]Then he sent a third slave; the tenants hurt him, too, and threw him out. [13]Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my own dear son; surely they will respect him!' [14]But when the tenants saw him they said to one another, 'This is the owner's son. Let us kill him, and his property will be ours!' [15]So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

"What, then, will the owner of the vineyard do to the tenants?" Jesus asked. [16]"He will come and kill those men, and turn over the vineyard to other tenants."

When the people heard this they said, "Surely not!"

[17]Jesus looked at them and asked, "What, then, does this scripture mean?

'The very stone which the builders rejected
turned out to be the most important stone.'

18 Everyone who falls on that stone will be cut to
pieces; and if the stone falls on someone, it will crush
him to dust."

The Question about Paying Taxes

(Also Matt. 22.15–22; Mark 12.13–17)

19 The teachers of the Law and the chief priests tried
to arrest Jesus on the spot, because they knew that he
had told this parable against them; but they were afraid
of the people. 20 So they watched for the right time. They
bribed some men to pretend they were sincere, and sent
them to trap Jesus with questions, so they could hand
him over to the authority and power of the Governor.
21 These spies said to Jesus, "Teacher, we know that
what you say and teach is right. We know that you pay
no attention to a man's status, but teach the truth about
God's will for man. 22 Tell us, is it against our Law for
us to pay taxes to the Roman Emperor, or not?"

23 But Jesus saw through their trick and said to them,
24 "Show me a silver coin. Whose face and name are
these on it?"

"The Emperor's," they answered.

25 So Jesus said, "Well, then, pay to the Emperor what
belongs to him, and pay to God what belongs to God."

26 They could not catch him in a thing there before the
people, so they kept quiet, amazed at his answer.

The Question about Rising from Death

(Also Matt. 22.23–33; Mark 12.18–27)

27 Some Sadducees came to Jesus. (They are the ones
who say that people will not rise from death.) They
asked him, 28 "Teacher, Moses wrote this law for us: 'If
a man dies and leaves a wife, but no children, that man's
brother must marry the widow so they can have children
for the dead man.' 29 Once there were seven brothers; the
oldest got married, and died without having children.
30 Then the second one married the woman, 31 and then
the third. The same thing happened to all seven—they

died without having children. [32]Last of all, the woman died. [33]Now, on the day when the dead rise to life, whose wife will she be? All seven of them had married her."

[34]Jesus answered them, "The men and women of this age marry, [35]but the men and women who are worthy to rise from death and live in the age to come do not marry. [36]They are like angels and cannot die. They are the sons of God, because they have risen from death. [37]And Moses clearly proves that the dead are raised to life. In the passage about the burning bush he speaks of the Lord as 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' [38]This means that he is the God of the living, not of the dead, because all are alive to him."

[39]Some of the teachers of the Law spoke up, "A good answer, Teacher!" [40]For they did not dare ask him any more questions.

The Question about the Messiah

(Also Matt. 22.41–46; Mark 12.35–37)

[41]Jesus said to them, "How can it be said that the Messiah will be the descendant of David? [42]Because David himself says in the book of Psalms,

'The Lord said to my Lord:
Sit here at my right side,
[43] until I put your enemies as a footstool
under your feet.'

[44]David, then, called him 'Lord.' How can the Messiah be David's descendant?"

Jesus Warns against the Teachers of the Law

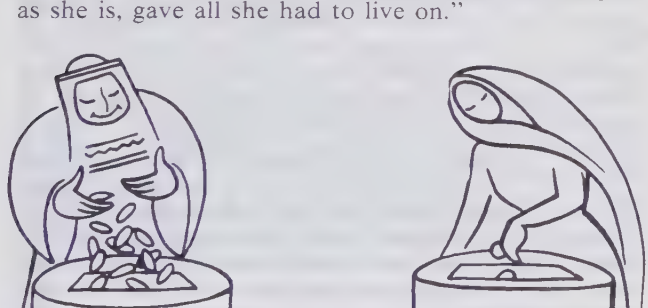
(Also Matt. 23.1–36; Mark 12.38–40)

[45]As all the people listened to him, Jesus said to his disciples, [46]"Watch out for the teachers of the Law, who like to walk around in their long robes, and love to be greeted with respect in the market place; who choose the reserved seats in the synagogues and the best places at feasts; [47]who take advantage of widows and rob them of their homes, and then make a show of saying long prayers! Their punishment will be all the worse!"

The Widow's Offering

(Also Mark 12.41–44)

21 Jesus looked around and saw rich men dropping
their gifts in the temple treasury, [2]and he also saw
a very poor widow dropping in two little copper coins.
[3]He said, "I tell you that this poor widow put in more
than all the others. [4]For the others offered their gifts
from what they had to spare of their riches; but she, poor
as she is, gave all she had to live on."



She, poor as she is, gave all she had to live on

Jesus Speaks of the Destruction of the Temple

(Also Matt. 24.1–2; Mark 13.1–2)

[5]Some of them were talking about the temple, how beautiful it looked with its fine stones and the gifts offered to God. Jesus said, [6]"All this you see—the time will come when not a single stone here will be left in its place; every one will be thrown down."

Troubles and Persecutions

(Also Matt. 24.3–14; Mark 13.3–13)

[7]"Teacher," they asked, "when will this be? And what will happen to show that the time has come for it to take place?"

[8]Jesus said, "Watch out; don't be fooled. Because many men will come in my name saying, 'I am he!' and, 'The time has come!' But don't follow them. [9]Don't be

afraid when you hear of wars and revolutions; such things must happen first, but they do not mean that the end is near."

10 He went on to say, "Countries will fight each other, kingdoms will attack one another. 11 There will be terrible earthquakes, famines, and plagues everywhere; there will be awful things and great signs from the sky. 12 Before all these things take place, however, you will be arrested and persecuted; you will be handed over to trial in synagogues and be put in prison; you will be brought before kings and rulers for my sake. 13 This will be your chance to tell the Good News. 14 Make up your minds ahead of time not to worry about how you will defend yourselves; 15 because I will give you such words and wisdom that none of your enemies will be able to resist or deny what you say. 16 You will be handed over by your parents, your brothers, your relatives, and your friends; they will put some of you to death. 17 Everyone will hate you because of me. 18 But not a single hair from your heads will be lost. 19 Stand firm, because this is how you will save yourselves."

Jesus Speaks of the Destruction of Jerusalem

(Also Matt. 24.15–21; Mark 13.14–19)

20 "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then you will know that soon she will be destroyed. 21 Then those who are in Judea must run away to the hills; those who are in the city must leave, and those who are out in the country must not go into the city. 22 For these are 'The Days of Punishment,' to make come true all that the Scriptures say. 23 How terrible it will be in those days for women who are pregnant, and for mothers with little babies! Terrible distress will come upon this land, and God's wrath will be against this people. 24 Some will be killed by the sword, and others taken as prisoners to all countries; and the heathen will trample over Jerusalem until their time is up."

The Coming of the Son of Man

(Also Matt. 24.29–31; Mark 13.24–27)

25 "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars. On earth, whole countries will be in despair, afraid

of the roar of the sea and the raging tides. [26]Men will faint from fear as they wait for what is coming over the whole earth; for the powers in space will be driven from their courses. [27]Then the Son of Man will appear, coming in a cloud with great power and glory. [28]When these things begin to happen, stand up and raise your heads, because your salvation is near."

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

(Also Matt. 24.32–35; Mark 13.28–31)

[29]Then Jesus told them this parable, "Remember the fig tree and all the other trees. [30]When you see their leaves beginning to appear you know that summer is near. [31]In the same way, when you see these things happening, you will know that the Kingdom of God is about to come.

[32]"Remember this! All these things will take place before the people now living have all died. [33]Heaven and earth will pass away; my words will never pass away."

The Need to Watch

[34]"Watch yourselves! Don't let yourselves become occupied with too much feasting and strong drink, and the worries of this life, or that Day may come on you suddenly. [35]For it will come like a trap upon all men over the whole earth. [36]Be on watch and pray always that you will have the strength to go safely through all these things that will happen, and to stand before the Son of Man."

[37]Jesus spent those days teaching in the temple, and when evening came he would go out and spend the night on the Mount of Olives. [38]All the people would go to the temple early in the morning to listen to him.

The Plot against Jesus

(Also Matt. 26.1–5; Mark 14.1–2; John 11.45–53)

22 The time was near for the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover. [2]The chief priests and the teachers of the Law were trying to find some way of killing Jesus; because they were afraid of the people.

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus

(Also Matt. 26.14–16; Mark 14.10–11)

3Then Satan went into Judas, called Iscariot, who was
one of the twelve disciples. 4So Judas went off and spoke
with the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard
about how he could hand Jesus over to them. 5They
were pleased and offered to pay him money. 6Judas
agreed to it and started looking for a good chance to
betray Jesus to them without the people knowing about
it.

Jesus Prepares to Eat the Passover Meal

(Also Matt. 26.17–25; Mark 14.12–21; John 13.21–30)

7The day came during the Feast of Unleavened Bread
when the lambs for the Passover meal had to be killed.
8Jesus sent Peter and John with these instructions, "Go
and get our Passover meal ready for us to eat."
9"Where do you want us to get it ready?" they asked
him.
10He said, "Listen! As you go into the city a man
carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into
the house that he enters, 11and say to the owner of the
house: 'The Teacher says to you, Where is the room
where my disciples and I will eat the Passover meal?'
12He will show you a large furnished room upstairs,
where you will get everything ready."
13They went off and found everything just as Jesus
had told them, and prepared the Passover meal.

The Lord's Supper

(Also Matt. 26.26–30; Mark 14.22–26; 1 Cor. 11.23–25)

14When the hour came, Jesus took his place at the
table with the apostles. 15He said to them, "I have
wanted so much to eat this Passover meal with you
before I suffer! 16For I tell you, I will never eat it until
it is given its full meaning in the Kingdom of God."
17Then Jesus took the cup, gave thanks to God, and
said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; 18for I
tell you that I will not drink this wine from now on until
the Kingdom of God comes."
19Then he took the bread, gave thanks to God, broke
it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body [which

is given for you. Do this in memory of me." [20]In the same way he gave them the cup, after the supper, saying, "This cup is God's new covenant sealed with my blood which is poured out for you.]

[21]"But, look! The one who betrays me is here at the table with me! [22]Because the Son of Man will die as God has decided it; but how terrible for that man who betrays him!"

[23]Then they began to ask among themselves which one of them it could be who was going to do this.

The Argument about Greatness

[24]An argument came up among the disciples as to which one of them should be thought of as the greatest. [25]Jesus said to them, "The kings of this world have power over their people, and the rulers are called 'Friends of the People.' [26]But this is not the way it is with you; rather, the greatest one among you must be like the youngest, and the leader must be like the servant. [27]Who is greater, the one who sits down to eat or the one who serves him? The one who sits down, of course. But I am among you as one who serves.

[28]"You have stayed with me all through my trials; [29]and just as my Father has given me the right to rule, so I will make the same agreement with you. [30]You will eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom, and you will sit on thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel."

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

(Also Matt. 26.31–35; Mark 14.27–31; John 13.36–38)

[31]"Simon, Simon! Listen! Satan has received permission to test all of you, as a farmer separates the wheat from the chaff. [32]But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith will not fail. And when you turn back to me, you must strengthen your brothers."

[33]Peter answered, "Lord, I am ready to go to prison with you and to die with you!"

[34]"I tell you, Peter," Jesus answered, "the rooster will not crow today until you have said three times that you do not know me."

Simon, Simon! Listen!

Purse, Bag, and Sword

35 Then Jesus said to them, "When I sent you out that
time without purse, bag, or shoes, did you lack any-
thing?"
"Not a thing," they answered.
36 "But now," Jesus said, "whoever has a purse or a
bag must take it; and whoever does not have a sword
must sell his coat and buy one. 37 For I tell you this: the
scripture that says, 'He was included with criminals,'
must come true about me. Because that which was
written about me is coming true."
38 The disciples said, "Look! Here are two swords,
Lord!"
"That is enough!" he answered.

Jesus Prays on the Mount of Olives

(Also Matt. 26.36–46; Mark 14.32–42)

39 Jesus left the city and went, as he usually did, to the
Mount of Olives; and the disciples went with him.
40 When he came to the place he said to them, "Pray that
you will not fall into temptation."
41 Then he went off from them, about the distance of
a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed. 42 "Father,"
he said, "if you will, take this cup away from me. Not
my will, however, but your will be done." [43 An angel
from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him.
44 In great anguish he prayed even more fervently; his

sweat was like drops of blood, falling to the ground.]
45 Rising from his prayer, he went back to the disciples and found them asleep, worn out by their
grief. 46 And he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up, and pray that you will not fall into
temptation."

The Arrest of Jesus
(Also Matt. 26.47–56; Mark 14.43–50; John 18.3–11)

47 Jesus was still speaking when a crowd arrived. Judas, one of the twelve disciples, was leading them, and he came up to Jesus to kiss him. 48 But Jesus said, "Is it with a kiss, Judas, that you betray the Son of Man?"
49 When the disciples who were with Jesus saw what was going to happen, they said, "Shall we strike with our swords, Lord?" 50 And one of them struck the High Priest's slave and cut off his right ear.
51 But Jesus said, "Enough of this!" He touched the man's ear and healed him.
52 Then Jesus said to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and the elders who had come there to get him, "Did you have to come with swords and clubs, as though I were an outlaw? 53 I was with you in the temple every day, and you did not try to arrest me. But this is your hour to act, when the power of darkness rules."

Peter Denies Jesus
(Also Matt. 26.57–58, 69–75; Mark 14.53–54, 66–72; John 18.12–18, 25–27)

54 They arrested Jesus and took him away into the house of the High Priest; and Peter followed from a distance. 55 A fire had been lit in the center of the courtyard, and Peter joined those who were sitting around it. 56 When one of the servant girls saw him sitting there at the fire, she looked straight at him and said, "This man too was with him!"
57 But Peter denied it, "Woman, I don't even know him!"
58 After a little while, a man noticed him and said, "You are one of them, too!"
But Peter answered, "Man, I am not!"
59 And about an hour later another man insisted

This man too was with him!

strongly, "There isn't any doubt that this man was with him, because he also is a Galilean!"

60But Peter answered, "Man, I don't know what you are talking about!"

At once, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. 61The Lord turned around and looked straight at Peter, and Peter remembered the Lord's words, how he had said, "Before the rooster crows today, you will say three times that you do not know me." 62Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Jesus Mocked and Beaten

(Also Matt. 26.67–68; Mark 14.65)

63The men who were guarding Jesus made fun of him and beat him. 64They blindfolded him and asked him, "Who hit you? Guess!" 65And they said many other insulting things to him.

Jesus before the Council

(Also Matt. 26.59–66; Mark 14.55–64; John 18.19–24)

66When day came, the elders of the Jews, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law met together, and Jesus was brought to their Council. 67"Tell us," they said, "are you the Messiah?"

He answered, "If I tell you, you will not believe me, 68and if I ask you a question you will not answer. 69But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right side of the Almighty God."

70They all said, "Are you, then, the Son of God?"
He answered them, "You say that I am."
71And they said, "We don't need any witnesses! We
ourselves have heard his very own words!"

Jesus before Pilate

(Also Matt. 27.1–2, 11–14; Mark 15.1–5; John 18.28–38)

23 The whole group rose up and took Jesus before
Pilate, 2where they began to accuse him, "We
caught this man misleading our people, telling them not
to pay taxes to the Emperor and claiming that he himself
is Christ, a king."
3Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"
"You say it," answered Jesus.
4Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds,
"I find no reason to condemn this man."
5But they insisted even more strongly, "He is starting
a riot among the people all through Judea with his teach-
ing. He began in Galilee, and now has come here."

Jesus before Herod

6When Pilate heard this he asked, "Is this man a
Galilean?" 7When he learned that Jesus was from the
region ruled by Herod, he sent him to Herod, who was
also in Jerusalem at that time. 8Herod was very pleased
when he saw Jesus, because he had heard about him and
had been wanting to see him for a long time. He was
hoping to see Jesus perform some miracle. 9So Herod
asked Jesus many questions, but Jesus did not answer a
word. 10The chief priests and the teachers of the Law
stepped forward and made strong accusations against
Jesus. 11Herod and his soldiers made fun of Jesus and
treated him with contempt. They put a fine robe on him
and sent him back to Pilate. 12On that very day Herod
and Pilate became friends; they had been enemies before
this.

Jesus Sentenced to Death

(Also Matt. 27.15–26; Mark 15.6–15; John 18.39—19.16)

13Pilate called together the chief priests, the leaders,
and the people, 14and said to them, "You brought this
man to me and said that he was misleading the people.

Now, I have examined him here in your presence, and I have not found him guilty of any of the crimes you accuse him of. [15]Nor did Herod find him guilty, because he sent him back to us. There is nothing this man has done to deserve death. [16]I will have him whipped, then, and let him go."

[[17]At each Passover Feast Pilate had to set free one prisoner for them.] [18]The whole crowd cried out, "Kill him! Set Barabbas free for us!" [19](Barabbas had been put in prison for a riot that had taken place in the city, and for murder.)

[20]Pilate wanted to set Jesus free, so he called out to the crowd again. [21]But they shouted back, "To the cross with him! To the cross!"

[22]Pilate said to them the third time, "But what crime has he committed? I cannot find anything he has done to deserve death! I will have him whipped and set him free."

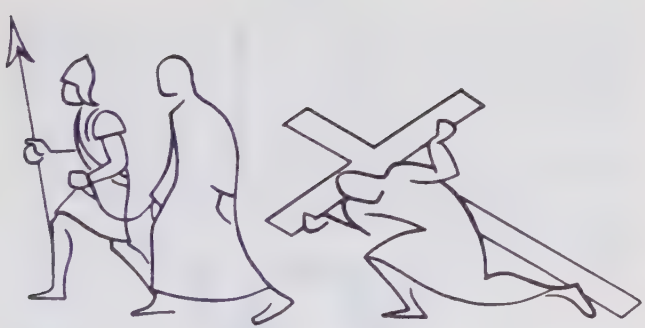
[23]But they kept on shouting at the top of their voices that Jesus should be nailed to the cross; and finally their shouting won. [24]So Pilate passed the sentence on Jesus that they were asking for. [25]He set free the man they wanted, the one who had been put in prison for riot and murder, and turned Jesus over to them to do as they wished.

Jesus Nailed to the Cross

(Also Matt. 27.32–44; Mark 15.21–32; John 19.17–27)

[26]They took Jesus away. As they went, they met a man named Simon, from Cyrene, who was coming into the city from the country. They seized him, put the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus.

[27]A large crowd of people followed him; among them were some women who were weeping and wailing for him. [28]Jesus turned to them and said, "Women of Jerusalem! Don't cry for me, but for yourselves and your children. [29]For the days are coming when people will say, 'How lucky are the women who never had children, who never bore babies, who never nursed them!' [30]That will be the time when people will say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!' and to the hills, 'Hide us!' [31]For if such things as these are done when the wood is green, what will it be like when it is dry?"



Put the cross on him and made him carry it

[32]They took two others also, both of them criminals, to be put to death with Jesus. [33]When they came to the place called "The Skull," they nailed Jesus to the cross there, and the two criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [34]Jesus said, "Forgive them, Father! They don't know what they are doing."

They divided his clothes among themselves by throwing dice. [35]The people stood there watching, while the Jewish leaders made fun of him, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Messiah whom God has chosen!"

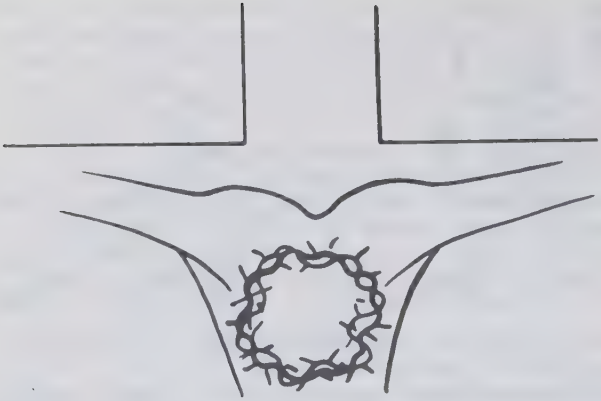
[36]The soldiers also made fun of him; they came up to him and offered him cheap wine, [37]and said, "Save yourself, if you are the king of the Jews!"

[38]These words were written above him: "This is the King of the Jews."

[39]One of the criminals hanging there hurled insults at him, "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!"

[40]The other one, however, rebuked him, saying, "Don't you fear God? We are all under the same sentence. [41]Ours, however, is only right, because we are getting what we deserve for what we did; but he has done no wrong." [42]And he said to Jesus, "Remember me, Jesus, when you come as King!"

[43]Jesus said to him, "I tell you this: today you will be in Paradise with me."



He said this and died

The Death of Jesus

(Also Matt. 27.45–56; Mark 15.33–41; John 19.28–30)

44It was about twelve o'clock when the sun stopped
shining and darkness covered the whole country until
three o'clock; 45and the curtain hanging in the temple
was torn in two. 46Jesus cried out in a loud voice,
"Father! In your hands I place my spirit!" He said this
and died.

47The army officer saw what had happened, and he
praised God, saying, "Certainly he was a good man!"

48When the people who had gathered there to watch
the spectacle saw what happened, they all went back
home, beating their breasts. 49All those who knew
Jesus personally, including the women who had fol-
lowed him from Galilee, stood off at a distance to see
these things.

The Burial of Jesus

(Also Matt. 27.57–61; Mark 15.42–47; John 19.38–42)

50-51There was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish
town of Arimathea. He was a good and honorable man,
and waited for the coming of the Kingdom of God.
Although a member of the Council, he had not agreed

with their decision and action. [52]He went into the presence of Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. [53]Then he took the body down, wrapped it in a linen sheet, and placed it in a grave which had been dug out of the rock —a grave which had never been used. [54]It was Friday, and the Sabbath was about to begin.

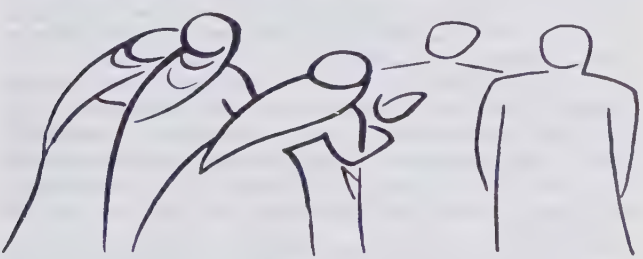
[55]The women who had followed Jesus from Galilee went with Joseph and saw the grave and how Jesus' body was placed in it. [56]Then they went back home and prepared the spices and ointments for his body.

On the Sabbath they rested, as the Law commanded.

The Resurrection

(Also Matt. 28.1–10; Mark 16.1–8; John 20.1–10)

24 Very early on Sunday morning the women went to the grave carrying the spices they had prepared. [2]They found the stone rolled away from the entrance to the grave, [3]so they went in; but they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. [4]They stood there puzzled about this, when suddenly two men in bright shining clothes stood by them. [5]Full of fear, the women bowed down to the ground, as the men said to them, "Why are you looking among the dead for one who is alive? [6]He is not here; he has been raised. Remember what he said to you while he was in Galilee: [7]'The Son of Man must be handed over to sinful men, be nailed to the cross, and rise to life on the third day.' "



Told all these things

[8]Then the women remembered his words, [9]returned from the grave, and told all these things to the eleven

disciples and all the rest. [10]The women were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James; they and the other women with them told these things to the apostles. [11]But the apostles thought that what the women said was nonsense, and did not believe them. [12]But Peter got up and ran to the grave; he bent down and saw the grave cloths and nothing else. Then he went back home wondering at what had happened.

The Walk to Emmaus

(Also Mark 16.12–13)

[13]On that same day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, [14]and they were talking to each other about all the things that had happened. [15]As they talked and discussed, Jesus himself drew near and walked along with them; [16]they saw him, but somehow did not recognize him. [17]Jesus said to them, "What are you talking about, back and forth, as you walk along?"

They stood still, with sad faces. [18]One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only man living in Jerusalem who does not know what has been happening there these last few days?"

[19]"What things?" he asked.

"The things that happened to Jesus of Nazareth," they answered. "This man was a prophet, and was considered by God and by all the people to be mighty in words and deeds. [20]Our chief priests and rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and he was nailed to the cross. [21]And we had hoped that he would be the one who was going to redeem Israel! Besides all that, this is now the third day since it happened. [22]Some of the women of our group surprised us; they went at dawn to the grave, [23]but could not find his body. They came back saying they had seen a vision of angels who told them that he is alive. [24]Some of our group went to the grave and found it exactly as the women had said; but they did not see him."

[25]Then Jesus said to them, "How foolish you are, how slow you are to believe everything the prophets said! [26]Was it not necessary for the Messiah to suffer these things and enter his glory?" [27]And Jesus explained to them what was said about him in all the Scriptures,

beginning with the books of Moses and the writings of all the prophets.

28They came near the village to which they were going, and Jesus acted as if he were going farther; 29but they held him back, saying, "Stay with us; the day is almost over and it is getting dark." So he went in to stay with them. 30He sat at table with them, took the bread, and said the blessing; then he broke the bread and gave it to them. 31Their eyes were opened and they recognized him; but he disappeared from their sight. 32They said to each other, "Wasn't it like a fire burning in us when he talked to us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?"

33They got up at once and went back to Jerusalem, where they found the eleven disciples gathered together with the others 34and saying, "The Lord is risen indeed! He has appeared to Simon!"

35The two then explained to them what had happened on the road, and how they had recognized the Lord when he broke the bread.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

(Also Matt. 28.16–20; Mark 16.14–18; John 20.19–23; Acts 1.6–8)

36While they were telling them this, suddenly the Lord himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

37Full of fear and terror, they thought that they were seeing a ghost. 38But he said to them, "Why are you troubled? Why are these doubts coming up in your minds? 39Look at my hands and my feet and see that it is I, myself. Feel me, and you will see, because a ghost doesn't have flesh and bones, as you can see I have."

40He said this and showed them his hands and his feet. 41They still could not believe, they were so full of joy and wonder; so he asked them, "Do you have anything to eat here?" 42They gave him a piece of cooked fish, 43which he took and ate before them.

44Then he said to them, "These are the very things I told you while I was still with you: everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the writings of the prophets, and the Psalms had to come true."

45Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46and said to them, "This is what is written:

that the Messiah must suffer, and rise from death on the
third day, [47]and that in his name the message about
repentance and the forgiveness of sins must be preached
to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem. [48]You are wit-
nesses of these things. [49]And I myself will send upon
you what my Father has promised. But you must wait
in the city until the power from above comes down upon
you."

Jesus Is Taken up to Heaven

(Also Mark 16.19–20; Acts 1.9–11)

[50]Then he led them out of the city as far as Bethany,
where he raised his hands and blessed them. [51]As he was
blessing them, he departed from them and was taken up
into heaven. [52]They worshiped him and went back into
Jerusalem, filled with great joy, [53]and spent all their time
in the temple giving thanks to God.

He raised his hands and blessed them

The Word of Life

1 Before the world was created, the Word already
existed; he was with God, and he was the same as
God. [2]From the very beginning, the Word was with
God. [3]Through him God made all things; not one thing
in all creation was made without him. [4]The Word was
the source of life, and this life brought light to men. [5]The
light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never
put it out.

[6]God sent his messenger, a man named John, [7]who
came to tell people about the light. He came to tell them,
so that all should hear the message and believe. [8]He
himself was not the light; he came to tell about the light.
[9]This was the real light, the light that comes into the
world and shines on all men.

[10]The Word, then, was in the world. God made the
world through him, yet the world did not know him.
[11]He came to his own country, but his own people did
not receive him. [12]Some, however, did receive him and
believed in him; so he gave them the right to become
God's children. [13]They did not become God's children
by natural means, by being born as the children of a
human father; God himself was their Father.

[14]The Word became a human being and lived among
us. We saw his glory, full of grace and truth. This was
the glory which he received as the Father's only Son.

[15]John told about him. He cried out, "This is the one
I was talking about when I said, 'He comes after me, but
he is greater than I am, because he existed before I was
born.' "

[16]Out of the fulness of his grace he has blessed us all,
giving us one blessing after another. [17]God gave the Law
through Moses; but grace and truth came through Jesus
Christ. [18]No one has ever seen God. The only One, who
is the same as God and is at the Father's side, he has
made him known.

John the Baptist's Message

(Also Matt. 3.1–12; Mark 1.1–8; Luke 3.1–18)

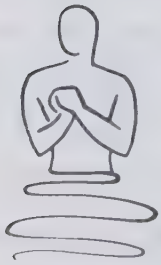
[19]The Jewish authorities in Jerusalem sent Priests and

Levites to John, to ask him, "Who are you?"
[20]John did not refuse to answer, but spoke out openly and clearly. This is what he said, "I am not the Messiah."
[21]"Who are you, then?" they asked. "Are you Elijah?"
"No, I am not," John answered.
"Are you the Prophet?" they asked.
"No," he replied.
[22]"Tell us who you are," they said. "We have to take an answer back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"
[23]John answered, "This is what I am:

> 'The voice of one who shouts in the desert:
> Make a straight path for the Lord to travel!' "

(This is what the prophet Isaiah had said.)
[24]The messengers had been sent by the Pharisees. [25]They asked John, "If you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet, why do you baptize?"

[26]John answered, "I baptize with water; among you stands the one you do not know. [27]He is coming after me, but I am not good enough even to untie his sandals."
[28]All this happened in Bethany, on the east side of the Jordan River, where John was baptizing.



I saw the Spirit come down

The Lamb of God

[29]The next day John saw Jesus coming to him, and said, "Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! [30]This is the one I was talking about when I said, 'A man is coming after me, but he is

greater than I am, because he existed before I was born.'
[31]I did not know who he would be, but I came baptizing
with water in order to make him known to Israel."
[32]This is the testimony that John gave: "I saw the
Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and stay
on him. [33] I still did not know him, but God, who
sent me to baptize with water, said to me, 'You will
see the Spirit come down and stay on a man; he is
the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' [34]I have
seen it," said John, "and I tell you that he is the
Son of God."

The First Disciples of Jesus

[35]The next day John was there again with two of his
disciples, [36]when he saw Jesus walking by. "Here is the
Lamb of God!" he said.
[37]The two disciples heard him say this and went with
Jesus. [38]Jesus turned, saw them following him, and
asked, "What are you looking for?"
They answered, "Where do you live, Rabbi?" (This
word, translated, means "Teacher.")
[39]"Come and see," he answered. So they went with
him and saw where he lived, and spent the rest of that
day with him. (It was about four o'clock in the after-
noon.)
[40]One of the two who heard John, and went with
Jesus, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. [41]At once
Andrew found his brother Simon and told him, "We
have found the Messiah." (This word means "Christ.")
[42]Then he took Simon to Jesus.
Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon, the son
of John. Your name will be Cephas." (This is the same
as Peter, and means "Rock.")

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

[43]The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He
found Philip and said to him, "Come with me!" [44](Philip
was from Bethsaida, the town where Andrew and Peter
lived.) [45]Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have
found the one of whom Moses wrote in the book of the
Law, and of whom the prophets also wrote. He is Jesus,
the son of Joseph, from Nazareth."

46"Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Nathanael asked.

"Come and see," answered Philip.

47When Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, he said about him, "Here is a real Israelite; there is nothing false in him!"

48Nathanael asked him, "How do you know me?"

Jesus answered, "I saw you when you were under the fig tree, before Philip called you."

49"Teacher," answered Nathanael, "you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

50Jesus said, "Do you believe just because I told you I saw you when you were under the fig tree? You will see much greater things than this!" 51And he said to them, "I tell you the truth: you will see heaven open and God's angels going up and coming down on the Son of Man."

The Wedding at Cana

2 Two days later there was a wedding in the town of Cana, in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, 2and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. 3When all the wine had been drunk, Jesus' mother said to him, "They are out of wine."

4"You must not tell me what to do, woman," Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come."

5Jesus' mother then told the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

6The Jews have religious rules about washing, and for this purpose six stone water jars were there, each one large enough to hold between twenty and thirty gallons. 7Jesus said to the servants, "Fill these jars with water." They filled them to the brim, 8and then he told them, "Now draw some water out and take it to the man in charge of the feast." They took it to him, 9and he tasted the water, which had turned into wine. He did not know where this wine had come from (but the servants who had drawn out the water knew); so he called the bridegroom 10and said to him, "Everyone else serves the best wine first, and after the guests have drunk a lot he serves the ordinary wine. But you have kept the best wine until now!"

11Jesus performed this first of his mighty works in

Fill these jars with water

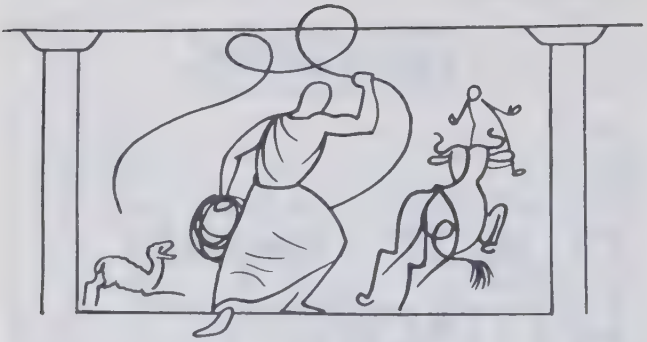
Cana of Galilee; there he revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

[12]After this, Jesus and his mother, brothers, and disciples went to Capernaum, and stayed there a few days.

Jesus Goes to the Temple

(Also Matt. 21.12–13; Mark 11.15–17; Luke 19.45–46)

[13]It was almost time for the Jewish Feast of Passover, so Jesus went to Jerusalem. [14]In the temple he found men selling cattle, sheep, and pigeons, and also the moneychangers sitting at their tables. [15]He made a whip from cords and drove all the animals out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle; he overturned the tables of the moneychangers and scattered their coins; [16]and he ordered the men who sold the pigeons, "Take them out of here! Do not make my Father's house a market place!" [17]His disciples remembered that the scripture says, "My devotion to your house, God, burns in me like a fire."



Do not make my Father's house a market place!

18 The Jewish authorities came back at him with a
question, "What miracle can you perform to show us
that you have the right to do this?"
19 Jesus answered, "Tear down this house of God and
in three days I will build it again."
20 "You are going to build it again in three days?" they
asked him. "It has taken forty-six years to build this tem-
ple!"
21 But the temple Jesus spoke of was his body. 22 So
when he was raised from death, his disciples remem-
bered that he said this; and they believed the scripture
and what Jesus had said.

Jesus Knows All Men

23 While Jesus was in Jerusalem during the Passover
Feast, many believed in him as they saw the mighty
works he did. 24 But Jesus did not trust himself to them,
because he knew all men well. 25 There was no need for
anyone to tell him about men, because he knew what
was in their hearts.

Jesus and Nicodemus

3 There was a man named Nicodemus, a leader of the
Jews, who belonged to the party of the Pharisees.

[2]One night he went to Jesus and said to him, "We know, Rabbi, that you are a teacher sent by God. No one could do the mighty works you are doing unless God were with him."

[3]Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth: no one can see the Kingdom of God unless he is born again."

[4]"How can a grown man be born again?" Nicodemus asked. "He certainly cannot enter his mother's womb and be born a second time!"

[5]"I tell you the truth," replied Jesus, "that no one can enter the Kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. [6]A man is born physically of human parents, but he is born spiritually of the Spirit. [7]Do not be surprised because I tell you, 'You must all be born again.' [8]The wind blows wherever it wishes; you hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. It is the same way with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

[9]"How can this be?" asked Nicodemus.

[10]Jesus answered, "You are a great teacher of Israel, and you don't know this? [11]I tell you the truth: we speak of what we know, and tell what we have seen, yet none of you is willing to accept our message. [12]You do not believe me when I tell you about the things of this world; how will you ever believe me, then, when I tell you about the things of heaven? [13]And no one has ever gone up to heaven except the Son of Man, who came down from heaven."

[14]As Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the desert, in the same way the Son of Man must be lifted up, [15]so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. [16]For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life. [17]For God did not send his Son into the world to be its Judge, but to be its Savior.

[18]Whoever believes in the Son is not judged; whoever does not believe has already been judged, because he has not believed in God's only Son. [19]This is how the judgment works: the light has come into the world, but men love the darkness rather than the light, because they do evil things. [20]Anyone who does evil things hates the light and will not come to the light, because

he does not want his evil deeds to be shown up. [21]But whoever does what is true comes to the light, in order that the light may show that he did his works in obedience to God.

Jesus and John

[22]After this, Jesus and his disciples went to the province of Judea. He spent some time with them there, and baptized. [23]John also was baptizing in Aenon, not far from Salim, because there was plenty of water there. People were going to him and he was baptizing them. [24](John had not yet been put in prison.)

[25]Some of John's disciples began arguing with a Jew about the matter of religious washing. [26]So they went to John and told him, "Teacher, you remember the man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan, the one you spoke about? Well, he is baptizing now, and everyone is going to him!"

[27]John answered, "No one can have anything unless God gives it to him. [28]You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not the Messiah, but I have been sent ahead of him.' [29]The bridegroom is the one to whom the bride belongs; the bridegroom's friend stands by and listens, and he is glad when he hears the bridegroom's voice. This is how my own happiness is made complete. [30]He must become more important, while I become less important."

He Who Comes from Heaven

[31]He who comes from above is greater than all; he who is from the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly matters. He who comes from heaven is above all. [32]He tells what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his message. [33]Whoever accepts his message proves by this that God is true. [34]The one whom God has sent speaks God's words, because God gives him the fulness of his Spirit. [35]The Father loves his Son and has put everything in his power. [36]Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever disobeys the Son will never have life, but God's wrath will remain on him forever.

Give me a drink of water

Jesus and the Woman of Samaria

4 The Pharisees heard that Jesus was winning and
baptizing more disciples than John. [2](Actually,
Jesus himself did not baptize anyone; only his disciples
did.) [3]When Jesus heard what was being said, he left
Judea and went back to Galilee; [4]on his way there he
had to go through Samaria.

[5]He came to a town in Samaria named Sychar,
which was not far from the field that Jacob had given
to his son Joseph. [6]Jacob's well was there, and Jesus,
tired out by the trip, sat down by the well. It was about
noon.

[7]A Samaritan woman came to draw some water, and
Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink of water." [8](His
disciples had gone into town to buy food.)

[9]The woman answered, "You are a Jew and I am a
Samaritan—how can you ask me for a drink?" (Jews
will not use the same dishes that Samaritans use.)

[10]Jesus answered, "If you only knew what God
gives, and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you
would ask him and he would give you living water."

[11]"Sir," the woman said, "you don't have a bucket
and the well is deep. Where would you get living wa-
ter? [12]Our ancestor Jacob gave us this well; he, his

sons, and his flocks all drank from it. You don't claim to be greater than Jacob, do you?"

[13]Jesus answered, "Whoever drinks this water will get thirsty again; [14]but whoever drinks the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring which will provide him with living water, and give him eternal life."

[15]"Sir," the woman said, "give me this water! Then I will never be thirsty again, nor will I have to come here and draw water."

[16]"Go call your husband," Jesus told her, "and come back here."

[17]"I don't have a husband," the woman said.

Jesus replied, "You are right when you say you don't have a husband. [18]You have been married to five men, and the man you live with now is not really your husband. You have told me the truth."

[19]"I see you are a prophet, sir," the woman said. [20]"My Samaritan ancestors worshiped God on this mountain, but you Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where we should worship God."

[21]Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the time will come when men will not worship the Father either on this mountain or in Jerusalem. [22]You Samaritans do not really know whom you worship; we Jews know whom we worship, because salvation comes from the Jews. [23]But the time is coming, and is already here, when the real worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. These are the worshipers the Father wants to worship him. [24]God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth."

[25]The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah, called Christ, will come. When he comes he will tell us everything."

[26]Jesus answered, "I am he, I who am talking with you."

[27]At that moment Jesus' disciples returned; and they were greatly surprised to find him talking with a woman. But none of them said to her, "What do you want?" or asked him, "Why are you talking with her?"

[28]Then the woman left her water jar, went back to town, and said to the people there, [29]"Come and see

the man who told me everything I have ever done. Could he be the Messiah?" [30]So they left the town and went to Jesus.

[31]In the meantime the disciples were begging Jesus, "Teacher, have something to eat!"

[32]But he answered, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

[33]So the disciples started asking among themselves, "Could somebody have brought him food?"

[34]"My food," Jesus said to them, "is to obey the will of him who sent me and finish the work he gave me to do. [35]You have a saying, 'Four more months and then the harvest.' I tell you, take a good look at the fields; the crops are now ripe and ready to be harvested! [36]The man who reaps the harvest is being paid and gathers the crops for eternal life; so that the man who plants and the man who reaps will be glad together. [37]The saying is true, 'One man plants, another man reaps.' [38]I have sent you to reap a harvest in a field where you did not work; others worked there, and you profit from their work."

[39]Many of the Samaritans in that town believed in Jesus because the woman had said, "He told me everything I have ever done." [40]So when the Samaritans came to him they begged him to stay with them; and Jesus stayed there two days.

[41]Many more believed because of his message, [42]and they told the woman, "We believe now, not because of what you said, but because we ourselves have heard him, and we know that he is really the Savior of the world."

Jesus Heals an Official's Son

[43]After spending two days there, Jesus left and went to Galilee. [44]For Jesus himself had said, "A prophet is not respected in his own country." [45]When he arrived in Galilee the people there welcomed him, because they had gone to the Passover Feast in Jerusalem and had seen everything that he had done during the feast.

[46]So Jesus went back to Cana of Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. There was a government official there whose son in Capernaum was sick. [47]When

he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and asked him to go to Capernaum and heal his son, who was about to die. [48]Jesus said to him, "None of you will ever believe unless you see great and wonderful works."

[49]"Sir," replied the official, "come with me before my child dies."

[50]Jesus said to him, "Go, your son will live!"

The man believed Jesus' words and went. [51]On his way home his servants met him with the news, "Your boy is going to live!"

[52]He asked them what time it was when his son got better, and they said, "It was one o'clock yesterday afternoon when the fever left him." [53]The father remembered, then, that it was at that very hour when Jesus had told him, "Your son will live." So he and all his family believed.

[54]This was the second mighty work that Jesus did after coming from Judea to Galilee.

The Healing at the Pool

5 After this, there was a Jewish religious feast, and Jesus went to Jerusalem. [2]There is in Jerusalem, by the Sheep Gate, a pool with five porches; in the Hebrew language it is called Bethzatha. [3]A large crowd of sick people were lying on the porches—the blind, the lame, and the paralyzed. [They were waiting for the water to move, [4]because every now and then an angel of the Lord went down into the pool and stirred up the water. The first sick person to go into the pool after the water was stirred up was healed from whatever disease he had.] [5]A man was there who had been sick for thirty-eight years. [6]Jesus saw him lying there and he knew that the man had been sick for such a long time; so he said to him, "Do you want to get well?"

[7]The sick man answered, "Sir, I don't have anyone here to put me in the pool when the water is stirred up; while I am trying to get in, somebody else gets there first."

[8]Jesus said to him, "Get up, pick up your mat, and walk." [9]Immediately the man got well; he picked up his mat, and walked.

The day this happened was a Sabbath, [10]so the Jew-

ish authorities told the man who had been healed, "This is a Sabbath, and it is against our Law for you to carry your mat."

[11]He answered, "The man who made me well told me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'"

[12]They asked him, "Who is this man who told you to pick up your mat and walk?"

[13]But the man who had been healed did not know who he was, because there was a crowd in that place and Jesus had slipped out.

[14]Afterward, Jesus found him in the temple and said, "Look, you are well now. Quit your sins, or something worse may happen to you."

[15]Then the man left and told the Jewish authorities that it was Jesus who had healed him. [16]For this reason they began to persecute Jesus, because he had done this healing on a Sabbath. [17]Jesus answered them, "My Father works always, and I too must work."

[18]This saying made the Jewish authorities all the more determined to kill him; not only had he broken the Sabbath law, but he had said that God was his own Father, and in this way had made himself equal with God.

The Authority of the Son

[19]So Jesus answered them, "I tell you the truth: the Son does nothing on his own; he does only what he sees his Father doing. What the Father does, the Son also does. [20]For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. He will show him even greater things than this to do, and you will all be amazed. [21]Even as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, in the same way the Son gives life to those he wants to. [22]Nor does the Father himself judge anyone. He has given his Son the full right to judge, [23]so that all will honor the Son in the same way as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.

[24]"I tell you the truth: whoever hears my words, and believes in him who sent me, has eternal life. He will not be judged, but has already passed from death to life. [25]I tell you the truth: the time is coming—the time has already come—when the dead will hear the voice of the

Son of God, and those who hear it will live. [26]Even as the Father is himself the source of life, in the same way he has made his Son to be the source of life. [27]And he has given the Son the right to judge, because he is the Son of Man. [28]Do not be surprised at this; the time is coming when all the dead in the graves will hear his voice, [29]and they will come out of their graves: those who have done good will rise and live, and those who have done evil will rise and be condemned."

Witnesses to Jesus

[30]"I can do nothing on my own; I judge only as God tells me, so my judgment is right, because I am not trying to do what I want, but only what he who sent me wants.

[31]"If I testify on my own behalf, what I say is not to be accepted as real proof. [32]But there is someone else who testifies on my behalf, and I know that what he says about me is true. [33]You sent your messengers to John, and he spoke on behalf of the truth. [34]It is not that I must have a man's witness; I say this only in order that you may be saved. [35]John was like a lamp, burning and shining, and you were willing for a while to enjoy his light. [36]But I have a witness on my behalf even greater than the witness that John gave: the works that I do, the works my Father gave me to do, these speak on my behalf and show that the Father has sent me. [37]And the Father, who sent me, also testifies on my behalf. You have never heard his voice, or seen his face, [38]and you do not keep his message in your hearts, because you do not believe in the one whom he sent. [39]You study the Scriptures because you think that in them you will find eternal life. And they themselves speak about me! [40]Yet you are not willing to come to me in order to have life.

[41]"I am not looking for praise from men. [42]But I know you; I know that you have no love for God in your hearts. [43]I have come with my Father's authority, but you have not received me; when someone comes with his own authority, you will receive him. [44]You like to have praise from one another, but you do not try to win praise from the only God; how, then, can you believe? [45]Do not think, however, that I will accuse you to my Father. Moses is the one who will accuse you—Moses,

in whom you have hoped. 46If you had really believed
Moses, you would have believed me, because he wrote
about me. 47But since you do not believe what he wrote,
how can you believe what I say?"

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand

(Also Matt. 14.13–21; Mark 6.30–44; Luke 9.10–17)

6 After this, Jesus went back across Lake Galilee (or,
Lake Tiberias). 2A large crowd followed him, be-
cause they had seen his mighty works in healing the
sick. 3Jesus went up a hill and sat down with his disci-
ples. 4The Passover Feast of the Jews was near. 5Jesus
looked around and saw that a large crowd was coming
to him, so he said to Philip, "Where can we buy enough
food to feed all these people?" 6(He said this to test
Philip; actually he already knew what he would do.)

7Philip answered, "For everyone to have even a little,
it would take more than two hundred dollars' worth of
bread."

8Another one of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's
brother, said, 9"There is a boy here who has five loaves

They all had as much as they wanted

of barley bread and two fish. But what good are they for all these people?"

10"Make the people sit down," Jesus told them. (There was a lot of grass there.) So all the people sat down; there were about five thousand men. 11Jesus took the bread, gave thanks to God, and distributed it to the people who were sitting there. He did the same with the fish, and they all had as much as they wanted. 12When they were all full, he said to his disciples, "Pick up the pieces left over; let us not waste a bit." 13So they took them all up, and filled twelve baskets with the pieces left over from the five barley loaves which the people had eaten.

14The people there, seeing this mighty work that Jesus had done, said, "Surely this is the Prophet who was to come to the world!" 15Jesus knew that they were about to come and get him, to make him king by force; so he went off again to the hills by himself.

Jesus Walks on the Water

(Also Matt. 14.22–33; Mark 6.45–52)

16When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, 17got into the boat, and went back across the lake toward Capernaum. Night came on, and Jesus still had not come to them. 18By now a strong wind was blowing and stirring up the water. 19The disciples had rowed about three or four miles when they saw Jesus walking on the water, coming near the boat, and they were terrified. 20"Don't be afraid," Jesus told them, "it is I!" 21They were willing to take him into the boat; and immediately the boat reached land at the place they were heading for.

The People Seek Jesus

22Next day the crowd which had stayed on the other side of the lake saw that only one boat was left there. They knew that Jesus had not gone in the boat with his disciples, but that they had left without him. 23Other boats, from Tiberias, came to shore near the place where the crowd had eaten the bread, after the Lord had given thanks. 24When the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they got into boats and went to Capernaum, looking for him.

Jesus the Bread of Life

[25]When the people found Jesus on the other side of
the lake they said to him, "Teacher, when did you get
here?"
[26]Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth: you are look-
ing for me because you ate the bread and had all you
wanted, not because you understood my works of
power. [27]Do not work for food that spoils; instead,
work for the food that lasts for eternal life. This food
the Son of Man will give you, because God, the
Father, has put his mark of approval on him."
[28]So they asked him, "What can we do in order to
do God's works?"
[29]Jesus answered, "This is the work God wants you
to do: believe in the one he sent."
[30]They replied, "What sign of power will you per-
form so that we may see it and believe you? What will
you do? [31]Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, just
as the scripture says, 'He gave them bread from
heaven to eat.' "
[32]"I tell you the truth," Jesus said. "What Moses
gave you was not the bread from heaven; it is my
Father who gives you the real bread from heaven.
[33]For the bread that God gives is he who comes down
from heaven and gives life to the world."
[34]"Sir," they asked him, "give us this bread always."
[35]"I am the bread of life," Jesus told them. "He who
comes to me will never be hungry; he who believes in
me will never be thirsty. [36]Now, I told you that you
have seen me but will not believe. [37]Everyone whom
my Father gives me will come to me. I will never turn
away anyone who comes to me, [38]because I have come
down from heaven to do the will of him who sent me,
not my own will. [39]He who sent me wants me to do
this: that I should not lose any of all those he has given
me, but that I should raise them all to life on the last
day. [40]For what my Father wants is this: that all who
see the Son and believe in him should have eternal life;
and I will raise them to life on the last day."
[41]The Jews started grumbling about him, because he
said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven."
[42]So they said, "This man is Jesus the son of Joseph,

isn't he? We know his father and mother. How, then, does he now say he came down from heaven?"

43 Jesus answered, "Stop grumbling among yourselves. 44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him to me; and I will raise him to life on the last day. 45 The prophets wrote, 'All men will be taught by God.' Everyone who hears the Father and learns from him comes to me. 46 This does not mean that anyone has seen the Father; he who is from God is the only one who has seen the Father. 47 I tell you the truth: he who believes has eternal life. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, but they died. 50 But the bread that comes down from heaven is such that whoever eats it will not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread he will live forever. The bread that I will give him is my flesh, which I give so that the world may live."

52 This started an angry argument among the Jews. "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" they asked.

53 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth: if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood you will not have life in yourselves. 54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him to life on the last day. 55 For my flesh is the real food, my blood is the real drink. 56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him. 57 The living Father sent me, and because of him I live also. In the same way, whoever eats me will live because of me. 58 This, then, is the bread that came down from heaven; it is not like the bread that your ancestors ate, but then died. The one who eats this bread will live forever."

59 Jesus said this as he taught in the synagogue in Capernaum.

The Words of Eternal Life

60 Many of his disciples heard this and said, "This teaching is too hard. Who can listen to this?"

61 Without being told, Jesus knew that his disciples were grumbling about this; so he said to them, "Does this make you want to give up? 62 Suppose, then, that you

should see the Son of Man go back up to the place where
he was before? [63]What gives life is God's Spirit; man's
power is of no use at all. The words I have spoken to you
are Spirit and life. [64]Yet some of you do not believe."
(Jesus knew from the very beginning who were the ones
that would not believe, and which one would betray
him.) [65]And he added, "This is the very reason I told
you that no one can come to me unless the Father makes
it possible for him to do so."

[66]Because of this, many of his followers turned back
and would not go with him any more. [67]So Jesus said
to the twelve disciples, "And you—would you like to
leave also?"

Would you like to leave also?

[68]Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom would
we go? You have the words that give eternal life.
[69]And now we believe and know that you are the Holy
One from God."

[70]Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose the
twelve of you? Yet one of you is a devil!" [71]He was
talking about Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. For
Judas, even though he was one of the twelve disciples,
was going to betray him.

Jesus and His Brothers

7 After this, Jesus traveled in Galilee; he did not want
to travel in Judea, because the Jewish authorities
there were wanting to kill him. [2]The Jewish Feast of
Tabernacles was near, [3]so Jesus' brothers said to him,

"Leave this place and go to Judea, so that your disciples will see the works you are doing. [4]No one hides what he is doing if he wants to be well known. Since you are doing these things, let the whole world know about you!" [5](Not even his brothers believed in him.)

[6]Jesus said to them, "The right time for me has not yet come. Any time is right for you. [7]The world cannot hate you, but it hates me, because I keep telling it that its ways are bad. [8]You go on to the feast. I am not going to this feast, because the right time has not come for me." [9]He said this, and then stayed on in Galilee.

Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles

[10]After his brothers went to the feast, Jesus also went; however, he did not go openly, but went secretly. [11]The Jewish authorities were looking for him at the feast. "Where is he?" they asked.

[12]There was much whispering about him in the crowd. "He is a good man," some people said. "No," others said, "he fools the people." [13]But no one talked about him openly, because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities.

[14]The feast was nearly half over when Jesus went to the temple and began teaching. [15]The Jewish authorities, greatly surprised, said, "How does this man know so much when he has never been to school?"

[16]Jesus answered, "What I teach is not my teaching, but comes from God, who sent me. [17]Whoever is willing to do what God wants will know whether what I teach comes from God or whether I speak on my own authority. [18]A person who speaks on his own is trying to gain glory for himself. He who wants glory for the one who sent him, however, is honest and there is nothing false in him. [19]Moses gave you the Law, did he not? But not one of you obeys the Law. Why are you trying to kill me?"

[20]The crowd answered, "You have a demon in you! Who is trying to kill you?"

[21]Jesus answered, "I did one great work and you were all surprised. [22]Because Moses ordered you to circumcise your sons (although it was not Moses but your ancestors who started it), you will circumcise a boy on

the Sabbath. [23]If a boy is circumcised on the Sabbath so that Moses' Law will not be broken, why are you angry with me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath? [24]Stop judging by external standards, and judge by true standards."

Is He the Messiah?

[25]Some of the people of Jerusalem said, "Isn't this the man they are trying to kill? [26]Look! He is talking in public, and nobody says anything against him! Can it be that the authorities really know that he is the Messiah? [27]But when the Messiah comes, no one will know where he is from. And we all know where this man comes from."

[28]As Jesus taught in the temple he said in a loud voice, "Do you really know me, and know where I am from? But I have not come on my own. He who sent me, however, is true. You do not know him, [29]but I know him, because I come from him and he sent me."

[30]Then they tried to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come. [31]But many in the crowd believed in him, and said, "When the Messiah comes, will he do more mighty works than this man has done?"

Guards Are Sent to Arrest Jesus

[32]The Pharisees heard the crowd whispering these things about him, so they and the chief priests sent some guards to arrest Jesus. [33]Jesus said, "I shall be with you a little while longer, and then I shall go away to him who sent me. [34]You will look for me, but you will not find me, because where I shall be you cannot go."

[35]The Jewish authorities said among themselves, "Where is he about to go so that we shall not find him? Will he go to the Greek cities where the Jews live, and teach the Greeks? [36]He says, 'You will look for me but you will not find me,' and, 'You cannot go where I shall be.' What does he mean?"

Streams of Living Water

[37]The last day of the feast was the most important. On that day Jesus stood up and said in a loud voice, "Who-

ever is thirsty should come to me and drink. [38]As the scripture says, 'Whoever believes in me, streams of living water will pour out from his heart.' " [39]Jesus said this about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were going to receive. At that time the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not been raised to glory.

Division among the People

[40]Many of the people in the crowd heard him say this and said, "This man is really the Prophet!"

[41]Others said, "He is the Messiah!"

But others said, "The Messiah will not come from Galilee! [42]The scripture says that the Messiah will be a descendant of David, and will be born in Bethlehem, the town where David lived." [43]So there was a division in the crowd because of him. [44]Some wanted to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him.

The Unbelief of the Jewish Authorities

[45]The guards went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why did you not bring him?"

[46]The guards answered, "Nobody has ever talked the way this man does!"

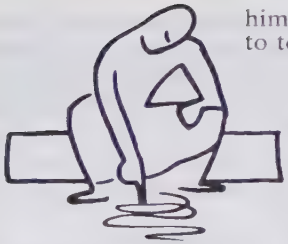
[47]"Did he fool you, too?" the Pharisees asked them. [48]"Have you ever known one of the authorities or one Pharisee to believe in him? [49]This crowd does not know the Law of Moses, so they are under God's curse!"

[50]Nicodemus was one of them; he was the one who had gone to see Jesus before. He said to them, [51]"According to our Law we cannot condemn a man before hearing him and finding out what he has done."

[52]"Well," they answered, "are you also from Galilee? Study the Scriptures and you will learn that no prophet ever comes from Galilee."

The Woman Caught in Adultery

8 [Then everyone went home, but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. [2]Early the next morning he went back to the temple. The whole crowd gathered around



Wrote on the ground

him, and he sat down and began to teach them. [3]The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees brought in a woman who had been caught committing adultery, and made her stand before them all. [4]"Teacher," they said to Jesus, "this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. [5]In our Law Moses gave a commandment that such a woman must be stoned to death. Now, what do you say?" [6]They said this to trap him, so they could accuse him. But Jesus bent over and wrote on the ground with his finger. [7]As they stood there asking him questions,he straightened up and said to them, "Whichever one of you has committed no sin may throw the first stone at her." [8]Then he bent over again and wrote on the ground. [9]When they heard this they all left, one by one, the older ones first. Jesus was left alone, with the woman still standing there. [10]He straightened up and said to her, "Where are they, woman? Is there no one left to condemn you?"

[11]"No one, sir," she answered.

"Well, then," Jesus said, "I do not condemn you either. Go, but do not sin again."]

Do not sin again

Jesus the Light of the World

[12]Jesus spoke to them again, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will have the light of life and will never walk in the darkness."

[13]The Pharisees said to him, "Now you are testifying on your own behalf; what you say proves nothing."

[14]"No," Jesus answered, "even if I do testify on my own behalf, what I say is true, because I know where I

came from and where I am going. You do not know where I came from or where I am going. [15]You make judgments in a purely human way; I pass judgment on no one. [16]But if I were to pass judgment, my judging would be true, because I am not alone in this; the Father who sent me is with me. [17]It is written in your Law that when two witnesses agree, what they say is true. [18]I testify on my own behalf, and the Father who sent me also testifies on my behalf."

[19]"Where is your father?" they asked him.

"You know neither me nor my Father," Jesus answered. "If you knew me you would know my Father also."

[20]Jesus said all this as he taught in the temple, in the room where the offering boxes were placed. And no one arrested him, because his hour had not come.

You Cannot Go Where I Am Going

[21]Jesus said to them again, "I will go away; you will look for me, but you will die in your sins. You cannot go where I am going."

[22]So the Jewish authorities said, "He says, 'You cannot go where I am going.' Does this mean that he will kill himself?"

[23]Jesus answered, "You come from here below, but I come from above. You come from this world, but I do not come from this world. [24]That is why I told you that you will die in your sins. And you will die in your sins if you do not believe that 'I Am Who I Am'."

[25]"Who are you?" they asked him.

Jesus answered, "What I have told you from the very beginning. [26]There are many things I have to say and judge about you. The one who sent me, however, is true, and I tell the world only what I have heard from him."

[27]They did not understand that he was talking to them about the Father. [28]So Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man you will know that 'I Am Who I Am'; then you will know that I do nothing on my own, but say only what the Father has taught me. [29]And he who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, because I always do what pleases him."

[30]Many who heard Jesus say these things believed in him.

Free Men and Slaves

31So Jesus said to the Jews who believed in him, "If
you obey my teaching you are really my disciples; 32you
will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

We are descendants of Abraham

33"We are the descendants of Abraham," they answered, "and we have never been anybody's slaves. What do you mean, then, by saying, 'You will be free'?"

34Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth: everyone who sins is a slave of sin. 35A slave does not belong to the family always, but a son belongs there forever. 36If the Son makes you free, then you will be really free. 37I know you are Abraham's descendants. Yet you are trying to kill me, because you will not accept my teaching. 38I talk about what my Father has shown me, but you do what your father has told you."

39They answered him, "Our father is Abraham."

"If you really were Abraham's children," Jesus replied, "you would do the same works that he did. 40All I have ever done is to tell you the truth I heard from God. Yet you are trying to kill me. Abraham did nothing like this! 41You are doing what your father did."

"God himself is the only Father we have," they answered. "We are his true sons."

42 Jesus said to them, "If God really were your father,
you would love me, because I came from God and now
I am here. I did not come on my own, but he sent me.
43 Why do you not understand what I say? It is because
you cannot bear to listen to my message. 44 You are the
children of your father, the Devil, and you want to
follow your father's desires. From the very beginning he
was a murderer. He has never been on the side of truth,
because there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie he
is only doing what is natural to him, because he is a liar
and the father of all lies. 45 I tell the truth, and that is why
you do not believe me. 46 Which one of you can prove
that I am guilty of sin? If I tell the truth, then why do
you not believe me? 47 He who comes from God listens
to God's words. You, however, are not from God, and
this is why you will not listen."

Jesus and Abraham

48 The Jews replied to Jesus, "Were we not right in
saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon in
you?"

49 "I have no demon," Jesus answered. "I honor my
Father, but you dishonor me. 50 I am not seeking honor
for myself. There is one who is seeking it and who judges
in my favor. 51 I tell you the truth: whoever obeys my
message will never die."

52 The Jews said to him, "Now we know for sure that
you have a demon! Abraham died, and the prophets
died, yet you say, 'Whoever obeys my message will
never die.' 53 Our father Abraham died; you do not claim
to be greater than Abraham, do you? And the prophets
also died. Who do you think you are?"

54 Jesus answered, "If I were to honor myself, my own
honor would be worth nothing. The one who honors me
is my Father —the very one you say is your God. 55 You
have never known him, but I know him. If I were to say
that I do not know him, I would be a liar, like you. But
I do know him, and I obey his word. 56 Your father
Abraham rejoiced that he was to see my day; he saw it
and was glad."

57 The Jews said to him, "You are not even fifty years
old—and you have seen Abraham?"

58"I tell you the truth," Jesus replied. "Before Abraham was born, 'I Am'."
59They picked up stones to throw at him; but Jesus hid himself and left the temple.

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

9 As Jesus walked along he saw a man who had been born blind. 2His disciples asked him, "Teacher, whose sin was it that caused him to be born blind? His own or his parents' sin?"
3Jesus answered, "His blindness has nothing to do with his sins or his parents' sins. He is blind so that God's power might be seen at work in him. 4We must keep on doing the works of him who sent me, as long as it is day; the night is coming, when no one can work. 5While I am in the world I am the light for the world."

He rubbed the mud on the man's eyes

6After he said this, Jesus spat on the ground and made some mud with the spittle; he rubbed the mud on the man's eyes, 7and told him, "Go wash your face in the Pool of Siloam." (This name means "Sent.") So the man went, washed his face, and came back seeing.
8His neighbors, then, and the people who had seen him begging before this, asked, "Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?"

[9]Some said, "He is the one," but others said, "No he isn't, he just looks like him."

So the man himself said, "I am the man."

[10]"How were your eyes opened?" they asked him.

[11]He answered, "The man named Jesus made some mud, rubbed it on my eyes, and told me, 'Go to Siloam and wash your face.' So I went, and as soon as I washed I could see."

[12]"Where is he?" they asked.

"I do not know," he answered.

The Pharisees Investigate the Healing

[13]Then they took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. [14]The day that Jesus made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. [15]The Pharisees, then, asked the man again how he had received his sight. He told them, "He put some mud on my eyes, I washed my face, and now I can see."

[16]Some of the Pharisees said, "The man who did this cannot be from God, because he does not obey the Sabbath law."

Others, however, said, "How could a man who is a sinner do such mighty works as these?" And there was a division among them.

[17]So the Pharisees asked the man once more, "You say he opened your eyes—well, what do you say about him?"

"He is a prophet," he answered.

[18]The Jewish authorities, however, were not willing to believe that he had been blind and could now see, until they called the man's parents [19]and asked them, "Is this your son? You say that he was born blind; well, how is it that he can see now?"

[20]His parents answered, "We know that he is our son, and we know that he was born blind. [21]But we do not know how it is that he is now able to see, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is old enough, and he can answer for himself!" [22]His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities, who had already agreed that anyone who professed that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the syna-

gogue. [23]That is why his parents said, "He is old enough; ask him!"

[24]A second time they called back the man who had been born blind and said to him, "Promise before God that you will tell the truth! We know that this man is a sinner."

[25]"I do not know if he is a sinner or not," the man replied. "One thing I do know: I was blind, and now I see."

[26]"What did he do to you?" they asked. "How did he open your eyes?"

[27]"I have already told you," he answered, "and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Maybe you, too, would like to be his disciples?"

[28]They insulted him and said, "You are that fellow's disciple; we are Moses' disciples. [29]We know that God spoke to Moses; as for that fellow, we do not even know where he comes from!"

[30]The man answered, "What a strange thing this is! You do not know where he comes from, but he opened my eyes! [31]We know that God does not listen to sinners; he does listen to people who respect him and do what he wants them to do. [32]Since the beginning of the world it has never been heard of that someone opened the eyes of a man born blind; [33]unless this man came from God, he would not be able to do a thing."

[34]They answered back, "You were born and raised in sin—and you are trying to teach us?" And they threw him out of the synagogue.

Spiritual Blindness

[35]Jesus heard that they had thrown him out. He found him and said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

[36]The man answered, "Tell me who he is, sir, so I can believe in him!"

[37]Jesus said to him, "You have already seen him, and he is the one who is talking with you now."

[38]"I believe, Lord!" the man said, and knelt down before Jesus.

[39]Jesus said, "I came to this world to judge, so that the blind should see, and those who see should become blind."

40 Some Pharisees, who were there with him, heard
him say this and asked him, "You don't mean that we
are blind, too?"
41 Jesus answered, "If you were blind, then you
would not be guilty; but since you say, 'We can see,'
this means that you are still guilty."

The Parable of the Sheepfold

10 "I tell you the truth: the man who does not enter
the sheepfold by the door, but climbs in some
other way, is a thief and a robber. 2 The man who goes
in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gate-
keeper opens the gate for him; the sheep hear his voice
as he calls his own sheep by name, and he leads them
out. 4 When he has brought them out, he goes ahead of
them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his
voice. 5 They will not follow someone else; instead, they
will run away from him, because they do not know his
voice."

The good shepherd is willing to die for the sheep

6 Jesus told them this parable, but they did not under-
stand what he was telling them.

Jesus the Good Shepherd

7 So Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth: I am the
door for the sheep. 8 All others who came before me are
thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not listen to them.
9 I am the door. Whoever comes in by me will be saved;
he will come in and go out, and find pasture. 10 The thief
comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy. I have
come in order that they might have life, life in all its
fulness.
11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd is

willing to die for the sheep. [12]The hired man, who is not a shepherd and does not own the sheep, leaves them and runs away when he sees a wolf coming; so the wolf snatches the sheep and scatters them. [13]The hired man runs away because he is only a hired man and does not care for the sheep. [14-15]I am the good shepherd. As the Father knows me and I know the Father, in the same way I know my sheep and they know me. And I am willing to die for them. [16]There are other sheep that belong to me that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them, too; they will listen to my voice, and they will become one flock with one shepherd.

[17]"The Father loves me because I am willing to give up my life, in order that I may receive it back again. [18]No one takes my life away from me. I give it up of my own free will. I have the right to give it, and I have the right to take it back. This is what my Father has commanded me to do."

[19]Again there was a division among the Jews because of these words. [20]Many of them were saying, "He has a demon! He is crazy! Why do you listen to him?"

[21]But others were saying, "A man with a demon could not talk like this! How could a demon open the eyes of blind men?"

Jesus Rejected by the Jews

[22]The time came to celebrate the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem; it was winter. [23]Jesus was walking in Solomon's Porch in the temple, [24]when the Jews gathered around him and said, "How long are you going to keep us in suspense? Tell us the plain truth: are you the Messiah?"

[25]Jesus answered, "I have already told you, but you would not believe me. The works I do by my Father's authority speak on my behalf; [26]but you will not believe because you are not my sheep. [27]My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. [28]I give them eternal life, and they shall never die; and no one can snatch them away from me. [29]What my Father has given me is greater than all, and no one can snatch them away from the Father's care. [30]The Father and I are one."

[31]Then the Jews once more picked up stones to throw

at him. [32]Jesus said to them, "I have done many good works before you which the Father gave me to do; for which one of these do you want to stone me?"

[33]The Jews answered back, "We do not want to stone you because of any good works, but because of the way in which you insult God! You are only a man, but you are trying to make yourself God!"

[34]Jesus answered, "It is written in your own Law that God said, 'You are gods.' [35]We know that what the scripture says is true forever; and God called them gods, those people to whom his message was given. [36]As for me, the Father chose me and sent me into the world. How, then, can you say that I insult God because I said that I am the Son of God? [37]Do not believe me, then, if I am not doing my Father's works. [38]But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, you should at least believe my works, in order that you may know once and for all that the Father is in me, and I am in the Father."

[39]Once more they tried to arrest him, but he slipped out of their hands.

[40]Jesus went back again across the Jordan River to the place where John had been baptizing, and stayed there. [41]Many people came to him. "John did no mighty works," they said, "but everything he said about this man was true." [42]And many people there believed in him.

The Death of Lazarus

11 A man named Lazarus, who lived in Bethany, became sick. Bethany was the town where Mary and her sister Martha lived. [2](This Mary was the one who poured the perfume on the Lord's feet and wiped them with her hair; it was her brother Lazarus who was sick.) [3]The sisters sent Jesus a message, "Lord, your dear friend is sick."

[4]When Jesus heard it he said, "The final result of this sickness will not be the death of Lazarus; this has happened to bring glory to God, and will be the means by which the Son of God will receive glory."

[5]Jesus loved Martha and her sister, and Lazarus. [6]When he received the news that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was for two more days. [7]Then he said to the disciples, "Let us go back to Judea."

[8]"Teacher," the disciples answered, "just a short time ago the Jews wanted to stone you; and you plan to go back there?"

[9]Jesus said, "A day has twelve hours, has it not? So if a man walks in broad daylight he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. [10]But if he walks during the night he stumbles, because there is no light in him." [11]Jesus said this, and then added, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I will go wake him up."

[12]The disciples answered, "If he is asleep, Lord, he will get well."

[13]But Jesus meant that Lazarus had died; they thought he meant natural sleep. [14]So Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead; [15]but for your sake I am glad that I was not with him, so you will believe. Let us go to him."

[16]Thomas (called the Twin) said to his fellow disciples, "Let us all go along with the Teacher, so that we may die with him!"

Jesus the Resurrection and the Life

[17]When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had been buried four days before. [18]Bethany was less than two miles from Jerusalem, [19]and many Jews had come to see Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother's death.

[20]When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him; but Mary stayed at home. [21]Martha said to Jesus, "If you had been here, Lord, my brother would not have died! [22]But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask of him."

[23]"Your brother will rise to life," Jesus told her.

[24]"I know," she replied, "that he will rise to life on the last day."

[25]Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies; [26]and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

[27]"Yes, Lord!" she answered. "I do believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who was to come into the world."

Jesus Weeps

28 After Martha said this she went back and called her
sister Mary privately. "The Teacher is here," she told
her, "and is asking for you." 29 When Mary heard this
she got up and hurried out to meet him. 30 (Jesus had not
arrived in the village yet, but was still in the place where
Martha had met him.) 31 The Jews who were in the house
with Mary comforting her followed her when they saw
her get up and hurry out. They thought that she was
going to the grave, to weep there.
32 When Mary arrived where Jesus was and saw him,
she fell at his feet. "Lord," she said, "if you had been
here, my brother would not have died!"
33 Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had
come with her weeping also; his heart was touched,
and he was deeply moved. 34 "Where have you buried
him?" he asked them.
"Come and see, Lord," they answered.
35 Jesus wept. 36 So the Jews said, "See how much he
loved him!"
37 But some of them said, "He opened the blind
man's eyes, didn't he? Could he not have kept Lazarus
from dying?"

Lazarus Brought to Life

38 Deeply moved once more, Jesus went to the tomb,
which was a cave with a stone placed at the entrance.
39 "Take the stone away!" Jesus ordered.
Martha, the dead man's sister, answered, "There will
be a bad smell, Lord. He has been buried four days!"
40 Jesus said to her, "Didn't I tell you that you would
see God's glory if you believed?" 41 They took the stone
away. Jesus looked up and said, "I thank you, Father,
that you listen to me. 42 I know that you always listen to
me, but I say this because of the people here, so they will
believe that you sent me." 43 After he had said this he
called out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" 44 The
dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped in grave
cloths, and a cloth around his face. "Untie him," Jesus
told them, "and let him go."

Lazarus, come out!

The Plot against Jesus

(Also Matt. 26.1–5; Mark 14.1–2; Luke 22.1–7)

45 Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary saw
what Jesus did, and believed in him. 46 But some of them
returned to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had
done. 47 So the Pharisees and the chief priests met with
the Council and said, "What shall we do? All the mighty
works this man is doing! 48 If we let him go on in this way
everyone will believe in him, and the Roman authorities
will take action and destroy the temple and our whole
nation!"

49 One of them, named Caiaphas, who was High Priest
that year, said, "You do not know a thing! 50 Don't you
realize that it is better for you to have one man die for the
people, instead of the whole nation being destroyed?"
51 Actually, he did not say this of his own accord; rather,
as he was High Priest that year, he was prophesying that
Jesus was going to die for the Jewish people, 52 and not
only for them, but also to bring together into one body all
the scattered children of God.

53 From that day on the Jewish authorities made plans
to kill Jesus. 54 So Jesus did not travel openly in Judea,
but left and went to a place near the desert, to a town
named Ephraim, where he stayed with the disciples.

55 The Jewish Feast of Passover was near, and many

people went up from the country to Jerusalem, to perform the ceremony of purification before the feast. 56They were looking for Jesus, and as they gathered in the temple they asked one another, "What do you think? Surely he will not come to the feast, will he?" 57The chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where Jesus was he must report it, so they could arrest him.

Jesus Anointed at Bethany

(Also Matt. 26.6–13; Mark 14.3–9)

12 Six days before the Passover, Jesus went to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, the man Jesus had raised from death. 2They prepared a dinner for him there, and Martha helped serve it, while Lazarus sat at the table with Jesus. 3Then Mary took a whole pint of a very expensive perfume made of pure nard, poured it on Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The sweet smell of the perfume filled the whole house. 4One of Jesus' disciples, Judas Iscariot—the one who was going to betray him—said, 5"Why wasn't this perfume sold for three hundred dollars and the money given to the poor?" 6He said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief; he carried the money bag and would help himself from it.

7But Jesus said, "Leave her alone! Let her keep what she has for the day of my burial. 8You will always have poor people with you, but I will not be with you always."

The Plot against Lazarus

9A large crowd of the Jews heard that Jesus was in Bethany, so they went there; they went, not only because of Jesus, but also to see Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised from death. 10So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus too; 11because on his account many Jews were leaving their leaders and believing in Jesus.

The Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem

(Also Matt. 21.1–11; Mark 11.1–11; Luke 19.28–40)

12The next day the large crowd that had come to the Passover Feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. 13So they took branches of palm trees and went out

to meet him, shouting, "Praise God! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord! God bless the King of Israel!"

[14]Jesus found a donkey and sat on it, just as the scripture says,

[15] "Do not be afraid, city of Zion!
Here comes your king,
riding on a young donkey."

[16]His disciples did not understand this at the time; but when Jesus had been raised to glory they remembered that the scripture said this about him, and that they had done this for him.

[17]The crowd that had been with Jesus when he called Lazarus out of the grave and raised him from death had reported what had happened. [18]That was why the crowd met him—because they heard that he had done this mighty work. [19]The Pharisees then said to each other, "You see, we are not succeeding at all! Look, the whole world is following him!"

Some Greeks Seek Jesus

[20]Some Greeks were among those who went to Jerusalem to worship during the feast. [21]They came to Philip (he was from Bethsaida, in Galilee) and said, "Sir, we want to see Jesus."

[22]Philip went and told Andrew, and the two of them went and told Jesus. [23]Jesus answered them, "The hour has now come for the Son of Man to be given great glory. [24]I tell you the truth: a grain of wheat remains no more than a single grain unless it is dropped into the ground and dies. If it does die, then it produces many grains. [25]Whoever loves his own life will lose it; whoever hates his own life in this world will keep it for life eternal. [26]Whoever wants to serve me must follow me, so that my servant will be with me where I am. My Father will honor him who serves me."

Jesus Speaks about His Death

[27]"Now my heart is troubled—and what shall I say? Shall I say, 'Father, do not let this hour come upon me'? But that is why I came, to go through this hour of suffering. [28]Father, bring glory to your name!"

Then a voice spoke from heaven, "I have brought glory to it, and I will do so again."

[29]The crowd standing there heard the voice and said, "It thundered!"

Others said, "An angel spoke to him!"

[30]But Jesus said to them, "It was not for my sake that this voice spoke, but for yours. [31]Now is the time for the world to be judged; now the ruler of this world will be overthrown. [32]When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to me." [33](In saying this he indicated the kind of death he was going to suffer.)

[34]The crowd answered back, "Our Law tells us that the Messiah will live forever. How, then, can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?"

[35]Jesus answered, "The light will be among you a little longer. Continue on your way while you have the light, so the darkness will not come upon you; because the one who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. [36]Believe in the light, then, while you have it, so that you will be the people of the light."

The Unbelief of the Jews

After Jesus said this he went off and hid himself from them. [37]Even though he had done all these mighty works before their very eyes they did not believe in him, [38]so that what the prophet Isaiah had said might come true,

"Lord, who believed the message we told?
To whom did the Lord show his power?"

[39]For this reason they were not able to believe, because Isaiah also said,

[40]"God has blinded their eyes,
and closed their minds,
so that their eyes would not see,
and their minds would not understand,
and they would not turn to me, says God,
for me to heal them."

[41]Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus' glory, and spoke about him.

[42]Even then, many Jewish authorities believed in

Jesus; but because of the Pharisees they did not talk about it openly, so as not to be put out of the synagogue. 43They loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.

Judgment by Jesus' Word

44Jesus said in a loud voice, "Whoever believes in me, believes not only in me but also in him who sent me. 45Whoever sees me, also sees him who sent me. 46I have come into the world as light, that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness. 47Whoever hears my message and does not obey it, I will not judge him. I came, not to judge the world, but to save it. 48Whoever rejects me and does not accept my message, has one who will judge him. The word I have spoken will be his judge on the last day! 49Yes, because I have not spoken on my own, but the Father who sent me has commanded me what I must say and speak. 50And I know that his command brings eternal life. What I say, then, is what the Father has told me to say."

Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet

13 It was now the day before the Feast of Passover. Jesus knew that his hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. He had always loved those who were his own in the world, and he loved them to the very end.

2Jesus and his disciples were at supper. The Devil had already decided that Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, would betray Jesus. 3Jesus knew that the Father had given him complete power; he knew that he had come from God and was going to God. 4So Jesus rose from the table, took off his outer garment, and tied a towel around his waist. 5Then he poured some water into a washbasin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel around his waist. 6He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Are you going to wash my feet, Lord?"

7Jesus answered him, "You do not know now what I am doing, but you will know later."

8Peter declared, "You will never, at any time, wash my feet!"

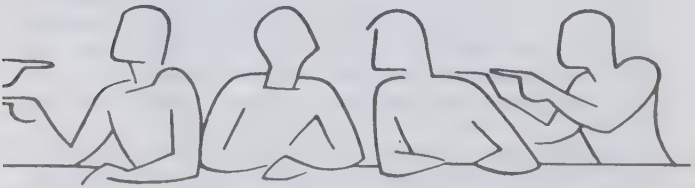
Wash my hands and head, too!

"If I do not wash your feet," Jesus answered, "you will no longer be my disciple."

[9]Simon Peter answered, "Lord, do not wash only my feet, then! Wash my hands and head, too!"

[10]Jesus said, "Whoever has taken a bath is completely clean and does not have to wash himself, except for his feet. All of you are clean—all except one." [11](Jesus already knew who was going to betray him; that is why he said, "All of you, except one, are clean.")

[12]After he had washed their feet, Jesus put his outer garment back on and returned to his place at the table. "Do you understand what I have just done to you?" he asked. [13]"You call me Teacher and Lord, and it is right that you do so, because I am. [14]I am your Lord and Teacher, and I have just washed your feet. You, then, should wash each other's feet. [15]I have set an example for you, so that you will do just what I have done for you. [16]I tell you the truth: no slave is greater than his



master; no messenger is greater than the one who sent
him. 17Now you know this truth; how happy you will
be if you put it into practice!
18"I am not talking about all of you; I know those I
have chosen. But the scripture must come true that
says, 'The man who ate my food turned against me.'
19I tell you this now before it happens, so that when it
does happen you will believe that 'I Am Who I Am'.
20I tell you the truth: whoever receives anyone I send,
receives me also; and whoever receives me, receives
him who sent me."

Jesus Predicts His Betrayal

(Also Matt. 26.20–25; Mark 14.17–21; Luke 22.21–23)

21After Jesus said this, he was deeply troubled, and
declared openly, "I tell you the truth: one of you is going
to betray me."
22The disciples looked at one another, completely
puzzled about whom he meant. 23One of the disciples,
whom Jesus loved, was sitting next to Jesus. 24Simon
Peter motioned to him and said, "Ask him who it is that
he is talking about."
25So that disciple moved closer to Jesus' side and
asked, "Who is it, Lord?"
26Jesus answered, "I will dip the bread in the sauce
and give it to him; he is the man." So he took a piece
of bread, dipped it, and gave it to Judas, the son of
Simon Iscariot. 27As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan
went into him. Jesus said to him, "Hurry and do what
you must!" 28None of those at the table understood why
Jesus said this to him. 29Since Judas was in charge of the

The disciples looked at one another

money bag, some of the disciples thought that Jesus had told him to go and buy what they needed for the feast, or else that he had told him to give something to the poor.

30 Judas accepted the bread and went out at once. It was night.

The New Commandment

31 After Judas had left, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man's glory is revealed; now God's glory is revealed through him. 32 And if God's glory is revealed through him, then God will reveal the glory of the Son of Man in himself, and he will do so at once. 33 My children, I shall not be with you very much longer. You will look for me; but I tell you now what I told the Jews, 'You cannot go where I am going.' 34 A new commandment I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 If you have love for one another, then all will know that you are my disciples."

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

(Also Matt. 26.31–35; Mark 14.27–31; Luke 22.31–34)

36 "Where are you going, Lord?" Simon Peter asked him.

"You cannot follow me now where I am going," answered Jesus; "but later you will follow me."

37 "Lord, why can't I follow you now?" asked Peter. "I am ready to die for you!"

38 Jesus answered, "Are you really ready to die for me? I tell you the truth: before the rooster crows you will say three times that you do not know me."

Jesus the Way to the Father

14 "Do not be worried and upset," Jesus told them. "Believe in God, and believe also in me. 2 There are many rooms in my Father's house, and I am going to prepare a place for you. I would not tell you this if it were not so. 3 And after I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to myself, so that you will be where I am. 4 You know how to get to the place where I am going."

5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where

you are going; how can we know the way to get there?"
[6]Jesus answered him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one goes to the Father except by me. [7]Now that you have known me," he said to them, "you will know my Father also; and from now on you do know him, and you have seen him."
[8]Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father; that is all we need."
[9]Jesus answered, "For a long time I have been with you all; yet you do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. Why, then, do you say, 'Show us the Father'? [10]Do you not believe, Philip, that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I have spoken to you," Jesus said to his disciples, "do not come from me. The Father, who remains in me, does his own works. [11]Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. If not, believe because of these works. [12]I tell you the truth: whoever believes in me will do the works I do—yes, he will do even greater ones, because I am going to the Father. [13]And I will do whatever you ask for in my name, so that the Father's glory will be shown through the Son. [14]If you ask me for anything in my name, I will do it."

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

[15]"If you love me, you will obey my commandments. [16]I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, the Spirit of truth, to stay with you forever. [17]The world cannot receive him, because it cannot see him or know him. But you know him, because he remains with you and lives in you.
[18]"I will not leave you alone; I will come back to you. [19]In a little while the world will see me no more, but you will see me; and because I live, you also will live. [20]When that day comes, you will know that I am in my Father, and that you are in me, just as I am in you.
[21]"Whoever accepts my commandments and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. My Father will love him who loves me; I too will love him and reveal myself to him."
[22]Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "Lord, how can it be

that you will reveal yourself to us and not to the world?"
23 Jesus answered him, "Whoever loves me will obey
my message. My Father will love him, and my Father
and I will come to him and live with him. 24 Whoever
does not love me does not obey my words. The mes-
sage you have heard is not mine, but comes from the
Father, who sent me.
25 "I have told you this while I am still with you.
26 The Helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will
send in my name, will teach you everything, and make
you remember all that I have told you.
27 "Peace I leave with you; my own peace I give you.
I do not give it to you as the world does. Do not be
worried and upset; do not be afraid. 28 You heard me
say to you, 'I am leaving, but I will come back to you.'
If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to
the Father, because he is greater than I. 29 I have told
you this now, before it all happens, so that when it
does happen you will believe. 30 I cannot talk with you
much longer, because the ruler of this world is coming.
He has no power over me, 31 but the world must know
that I love the Father; that is why I do everything as
he commands me.
"Come, let us go from this place."

Jesus the Real Vine

15 "I am the real vine, and my Father is the gar-
dener. 2 He breaks off every branch in me that
does not bear fruit, and prunes every branch that does
bear fruit, so that it will be clean and bear more fruit.
3 You have been made clean already by the message I
have spoken to you. 4 Remain united to me, and I will
remain united to you. A branch cannot bear fruit by
itself; it can do so only if it remains in the vine. In the
same way you cannot bear fruit unless you remain in me.
5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever re-
mains in me, and I in him, will bear much fruit; for you
can do nothing without me. 6 Whoever does not remain
in me is thrown out, like a branch, and dries up; such
branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire, where
they are burned. 7 If you remain in me, and my words
remain in you, then you will ask for anything you wish,
and you shall have it. 8 This is how my Father's glory is

shown: by your bearing much fruit; and in this way you become my disciples. [9]I love you just as the Father loves me; remain in my love. [10]If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.

[11]"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. [12]My commandment is this: love one another, just as I love you. [13]The greatest love a man can have for his friends is to give his life for them. [14]And you are my friends, if you do what I command you. [15]I do not call you servants any longer, because a servant does not know what his master is doing. Instead, I call you friends, because I have told you everything I heard from my Father. [16]You did not choose me; I chose you, and appointed you to go and bear much fruit, the kind of fruit that endures. And so the Father will give you whatever you ask of him in my name. [17]This, then, is what I command you: love one another."

The World's Hatred

[18]"If the world hates you, you must remember that it has hated me first. [19]If you belonged to the world, then the world would love you as its own. But I chose you from this world, and you do not belong to it; this is why the world hates you. [20]Remember what I told you: 'No slave is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you too; if they obeyed my message, they will obey yours too. [21]But they will do all this to you because you are mine; for they do not know him who sent me. [22]They would not have been guilty of sin if I had not come and spoken to them; as it is, they no longer have any excuse for their sin. [23]Whoever hates me hates my Father also. [24]They would not have been guilty of sin if I had not done the works among them that no one else ever did; as it is, they have seen what I did and they hate both me and my Father. [25]This must be, however, so that what is written in their Law may come true, 'They hated me for no reason at all.'

[26]"The Helper will come—the Spirit of truth, who comes from the Father. I will send him to you from the Father, and he will speak about me. [27]And you,

I chose you from this world

too, will speak about me, because you have been with me from the very beginning.

16 "I have told you this so that you will not fall away. 2They will put you out of their synagogues. And the time will come when anyone who kills you will think that by doing this he is serving God. 3They will do these things to you because they have not known either the Father or me. 4But I have told you this, so that when the time comes for them to do these things, you will remember that I told you."

The Work of the Holy Spirit

"I did not tell you these things at the beginning, because I was with you. 5But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' 6And now that I have told you, sadness has filled your hearts. 7But I tell you the truth: it is better for you that I go away, because if I do not go, the Helper will not come to you. But if I do go away, then I will send

him to you. [8]And when he comes he will prove to the people of the world that they are wrong about sin, and about what is right, and about God's judgment. [9]They are wrong about sin, because they do not believe in me; [10]about what is right, because I am going to the Father and you will not see me any more; [11]about judgment, because the ruler of this world has already been judged.

[12]"I have much more to tell you, but now it would be too much for you to bear. [13]But when the Spirit of truth comes, he will lead you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own, but he will speak of what he hears and tell you of things to come. [14]He will give me glory, because he will take what I have to say and tell it to you. [15]All that my Father has is mine; that is why I said that the Spirit will take what I give him and tell it to you."

Sadness and Gladness

[16]"In a little while you will not see me any more; and then a little while later you will see me."

[17]Some of his disciples said to the others, "What does this mean? He tells us, 'In a little while you will not see me, and then a little while later you will see me'; and he also says, 'It is because I am going to the Father.' [18]What does this 'a little while' mean?" they asked. "We do not know what he is talking about!"

[19]Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, "I said, 'In a little while you will not see me, and then a little while later you will see me.' Is this what you are asking about among yourselves? [20]I tell you the truth: you will cry and weep, but the world will be glad; you will be sad, but your sadness will turn into gladness. [21]When a woman is about to give birth to a child she is sad, because her hour of suffering has come; but when the child is born she forgets her suffering, because she is happy that a baby has been born into the world. [22]That is the way it is with you: now you are sad, but I will see you again, and your hearts will be filled with gladness, the kind of gladness that no one can take away from you.

[23]"When that day comes you will not ask me for anything. I tell you the truth: the Father will give you whatever you ask of him in my name. [24]Until now you

have not asked for anything in my name; ask and you will receive, so that your happiness may be complete."

Victory over the World

25"I have told you these things by means of parables. But the time will come when I will use parables no more, but I will speak to you in plain words about the Father. 26When that day comes you will ask him in my name; and I do not say that I will ask him on your behalf, 27because the Father himself loves you. He loves you because you love me and have believed that I came from God. 28I did come from the Father and I came into the world; and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father."

29Then his disciples said to him, "Look, you are speaking very plainly now, without using parables. 30We know now that you know everything; you do not need someone to ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God."

31Jesus answered them, "Do you believe now? 32The time is coming, and is already here, when all of you will be scattered, each one to his own home, and I will be left all alone. But I am not really alone, because the Father is with me. 33I have told you this so that you will have peace by being united to me. The world will make you suffer. But be brave! I have defeated the world!"

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

17 After Jesus finished saying this, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come. Give glory to your Son, that the Son may give glory to you. 2For you gave him authority over all men, so that he might give eternal life to all those you gave him. 3And this is eternal life: for men to know you, the only true God, and to know Jesus Christ, whom you sent. 4I showed your glory on earth; I finished the work you gave me to do. 5Father! Give me glory in your presence now, the same glory I had with you before the world was made.

6"I have made you known to the men you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you, and you gave them

to me. They have obeyed your
word, [7]and now they know that
everything you gave me comes
from you. [8]I gave them the mes-
sage that you gave me, and they
received it; they know that it is
true that I came from you, and
they believe that you sent me.

[9]"I pray for them. I do not pray
for the world, but for the men you
gave me, because they belong to
you. [10]All I have is yours, and all
you have is mine; and my glory is
shown through them. [11]And now I am coming to you;
I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world.
Holy Father! Keep them safe by the power of your
name, the name you gave me, so they may be one just
as you and I are one. [12]While I was with them I kept
them safe by the power of your name, the name you
gave me. I protected them, and not one of them was lost,
except the man who was bound to be lost—that the
scripture might come true. [13]And now I am coming to
you, and I say these things in the world so that they
might have my joy in their hearts, in all its fulness. [14]I
gave them your message and the world hated them,
because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not
belong to the world. [15]I do not ask you to take them out
of the world, but I do ask you to keep them safe from
the Evil One. [16]Just as I do not belong to the world, they
do not belong to the world. [17]Dedicate them to yourself,
by means of the truth; your word is truth. [18]I sent them
into the world just as you sent me into the world. [19]And
for their sake I dedicate myself to you, in order that
they, too, may be truly dedicated to you.

[20]"I do not pray only for them, but also for those
who believe in me because of their message. [21]I pray
that they may all be one. Father! May they be in us,
just as you are in me and I am in you. May they be
one, so that the world will believe that you sent me. [22]I
gave them the same glory you gave me, so that they
may be one, just as you and I are one: [23]I in them and
you in me, so that they may be completely one, in

I pray for them

order that the world may know that you sent me and that you love them as you love me.

24"Father! You have given them to me, and I want them to be with me where I am, so that they may see my glory, the glory you gave me; because you loved me before the world was made. 25Righteous Father! The world does not know you, but I know you, and these know that you sent me. 26I made you known to them and I will continue to do so, in order that the love you have for me may be in them, and I also may be in them."

The Arrest of Jesus

(Also Matt. 26.47-56; Mark 14.43-50; Luke 22.47-53)

18 After Jesus had said this prayer he left with his disciples and went across the brook Kidron. There was a garden in that place, and Jesus and his disciples went in. 2Judas, the traitor, knew where it was, because many times Jesus had met there with his disciples. 3So Judas went to the garden, taking with him a group of soldiers and some temple guards sent by the chief priests and the Pharisees; they were armed, and carried lanterns and torches. 4Jesus knew everything that was going to happen to him; so he stepped forward and said to them, "Who is it you are looking for?"

5"Jesus of Nazareth," they answered.

"I am he," he said.

Judas, the traitor, was standing there with them. 6When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they moved back

Moved back and fell to the ground

and fell to the ground. 7Jesus asked them again, "Who is it you are looking for?"

"Jesus of Nazareth," they said.

8"I have already told you that I am he," Jesus said. "If, then, you are looking for me, let these others go." 9(He said this so that what he had said might come true, "Father, I have not lost even one of those you gave me.")

10Simon Peter had a sword; he drew it and struck the High Priest's slave, cutting off his right ear. The name of the slave was Malchus. 11Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back in its place! Do you think that I will not drink the cup of suffering my Father has given me?"

Jesus before Annas

12The group of soldiers with their commanding officer and the Jewish guards arrested Jesus, tied him up, 13and took him first to Annas. He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was High Priest that year. 14It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that it was better that one man die for all the people.

Peter Denies Jesus

(Also Matt. 26.69–70; Mark 14.66–68; Luke 22.55–57)

15Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. That other disciple was well known to the High Priest, so he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the High Priest's house. 16Peter stayed outside by the gate. The other disciple, who was well known to the High Priest, went back out, spoke to the girl at the gate and brought Peter inside. 17The girl at the gate said to Peter, "Aren't you one of the disciples of that man?"

"No, I am not," answered Peter.

18It was cold, so the servants and guards had built a charcoal fire and were standing around it, warming themselves. Peter went over and stood with them, warming himself.

The High Priest Questions Jesus

(Also Matt. 26.59–66; Mark 14.55–64; Luke 22.66–71)

19The High Priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. 20Jesus answered, "I have always spoken publicly to everyone; all my teaching was

done in the synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have never said anything in secret. [21]Why, then, do you question me? Question the people who heard me. Ask them what I told them—they know what I said."

[22]When Jesus said this, one of the guards there slapped him and said, "How dare you talk like this to the High Priest!"

[23]Jesus answered him, "If I have said something wrong, tell everyone here what it was. But if I am right in what I have said, why do you hit me?"

[24]So Annas sent him, still tied up, to Caiaphas the High Priest.

Peter Denies Jesus Again

(Also Matt. 26.71–75; Mark 14.69–72; Luke 22.58–62)

[25]Peter was still standing there keeping himself warm. So the others said to him, "Aren't you one of the disciples of that man?"

But Peter denied it. "No, I am not," he said.

[26]One of the High Priest's slaves, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, spoke up. "Didn't I see you with him in the garden?" he asked.

[27]Again Peter said "No"—and at once a rooster crowed.

Jesus before Pilate

(Also Matt. 27.1–2, 11–14; Mark 15.1–5; Luke 23.1–5)

[28]They took Jesus from Caiaphas' house to the governor's palace. It was early in the morning. The Jews did not go inside the palace because they wanted to keep themselves ritually clean, in order to be able to eat the Passover meal. [29]So Pilate went outside to them and asked, "What do you accuse this man of?"

[30]Their answer was, "We would not have brought him to you if he had not committed a crime."

[31]Pilate said to them, "You yourselves take him and try him according to your own law."

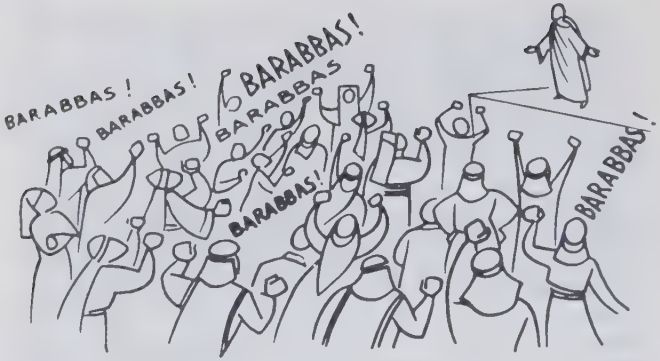
The Jews replied, "We are not allowed to put anyone to death." [32](This happened to make come true what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he would die.)

33 Pilate went back into the palace and called Jesus.
"Are you the king of the Jews?" he asked him.
34 Jesus answered, "Does this question come from
you or have others told you about me?"
35 Pilate replied, "Do you think I am a Jew? It was
your own people and their chief priests who handed
you over to me. What have you done?"
36 Jesus said, "My kingdom does not belong to this
world; if my kingdom belonged to this world, my fol-
lowers would fight to keep me from being handed over
to the Jews. No, my kingdom does not belong here!"
37 So Pilate asked him, "Are you a king, then?"
Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. I was
born and came into the world for this one purpose, to
speak about the truth. Whoever belongs to the truth
listens to me."
38 "And what is truth?" Pilate asked.

Jesus Sentenced to Death
(Also Matt. 27.15–31; Mark 15.6–20; Luke 23.13–25)

Then Pilate went back outside to the Jews and said
to them, "I cannot find any reason to condemn him.
39 But according to the custom you have, I always set
free a prisoner for you during the Passover. Do you want
me to set the king of the Jews free for you?"

Are you a king, then?



We want Barabbas!

40They answered him with a shout, "No, not him! We want Barabbas!" (Barabbas was a bandit.)

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him whipped.
2The soldiers made a crown of thorny branches and put it on his head; they put a purple robe on him,
3and came to him and said, "Long live the King of the Jews!" And they went up and slapped him.

Went up and slapped him

[4]Pilate went back out once more and said to the crowd, "Look, I will bring him out here to you, to let you see that I cannot find any reason to condemn him." [5]So Jesus went outside, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Look! Here is the man!"

[6]When the chief priests and the guards saw him they shouted, "Nail him to the cross! Nail him to the cross!"

Pilate said to them, "You take him, then, and nail him to the cross. I find no reason to condemn him."

[7]The Jews answered back, "We have a law that says he ought to die, because he claimed to be the Son of God."

[8]When Pilate heard them say this, he was even more afraid. [9]He went back into the palace and asked Jesus, "Where do you come from?"

But Jesus did not answer. [10]Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Remember, I have the authority to set you free, and also to have you nailed to the cross."

[11]Jesus answered, "You have authority over me only because it was given to you by God. So the man who handed me over to you is guilty of a worse sin."

[12]When Pilate heard this he tried to find a way to set Jesus free. But the Jews shouted back, "If you set him free that means you are not the Emperor's friend! Anyone who claims to be a king is the Emperor's enemy!"

[13]When Pilate heard these words, he took Jesus outside and sat down on the judge's seat in the place called "The Stone Pavement." (In Hebrew the name is "Gabbatha.") [14]It was then almost noon of the day before the Passover. Pilate said to the Jews, "Here is your king!"

[15]They shouted back, "Kill him! Kill him! Nail him to the cross!"

Pilate asked them, "Do you want me to nail your king to the cross?"

The chief priests answered, "The only king we have is the Emperor!"

[16]Then Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be nailed to the cross.

Went out, carrying his cross

Jesus Nailed to the Cross

(Also Matt. 27.32–44; Mark 15.21–32; Luke 23.26–43)

So they took charge of Jesus. [17]He went out, carrying
his cross, and came to "The Place of the Skull," as it is
called. (In Hebrew it is called "Golgotha.") [18]There they
nailed him to the cross; they also nailed two other men
to crosses, one on each side, with Jesus between them.
[19]Pilate wrote a notice and had it put on the cross.
"Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," is what he
wrote. [20]Many Jews read this, because the place where
Jesus was nailed to the cross was not far from the city.
The notice was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek.
[21]The Jewish chief priests said to Pilate, "Do not write
'The King of the Jews,' but rather, 'This man said, I am
the King of the Jews.' "
[22]Pilate answered, "What I have written stays writ-
ten."
[23]After the soldiers had nailed Jesus to the cross,
they took his clothes and divided them into four parts,
one part for each soldier. They also took the robe,
which was made of one piece of woven cloth, without

any seams in it. [24]The soldiers said to each other, "Let us not tear it; let us throw dice to see who will get it." This happened to make the scripture come true,

"They divided my clothes among themselves,
and gambled for my robe."

So the soldiers did this.

[25]Standing close to Jesus' cross were his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. [26]Jesus saw his mother and the disciple he loved standing there; so he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son."

[27]Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time the disciple took her to live in his home.

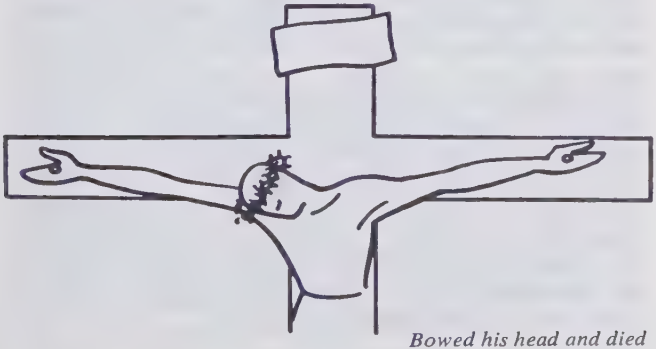
The Death of Jesus

(Also Matt. 27.45–56; Mark 15.33–41; Luke 23.44–49)

[28]Jesus knew that by now everything had been completed; and in order to make the scripture come true he said, "I am thirsty."

[29]A bowl was there, full of cheap wine; they soaked a sponge in the wine, put it on a branch of hyssop, and lifted it up to his lips. [30]Jesus took the wine and said, "It is finished!"

Then he bowed his head and died.



Bowed his head and died

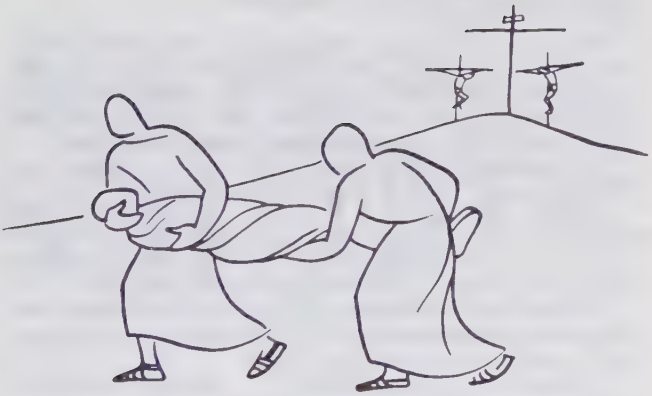
Jesus' Side Pierced

[31]Then the Jews asked Pilate to allow them to break
the legs of the men who had been put to death, and take
them down from the crosses. They did this because it
was Friday, and they did not want the bodies to stay on
the crosses on the Sabbath day, since the coming Sab-
bath was especially holy. [32]So the soldiers went and
broke the legs of the first man and then of the other man
who had been put to death with Jesus. [33]But when they
came to Jesus they saw that he was already dead, so they
did not break his legs. [34]One of the soldiers, however,
plunged his spear into Jesus' side, and at once blood and
water poured out. [35](The one who saw this happen has
spoken of it, so that you also may believe. What he said
is true, and he knows that he speaks the truth.) [36]This
was done to make the scripture come true, "Not one of
his bones will be broken." [37]And there is another scrip-
ture that says, "People will look at him whom they
pierced."

The Burial of Jesus

(Also Matt. 27.57–61; Mark 15.42–47; Luke 23.50–56)

[38]After this, Joseph, who was from the town of Arim-
athea, asked Pilate if he could take Jesus' body. (Joseph
was a follower of Jesus, but in secret, because he was
afraid of the Jewish authorities.) Pilate told him he could
have the body, so Joseph went and took it away.
[39]Nicodemus, who at first had gone to see Jesus at night,
went with Joseph, taking with him about one hundred
pounds of spices, a mixture of myrrh and aloes. [40]The
two men took Jesus' body and wrapped it in linen cloths
with the spices; for this is how the Jews prepare a body
for burial. [41]There was a garden in the place where Jesus
had been put to death, and in it there was a new tomb
where no one had ever been buried. [42]Since it was the
day before the Jewish Sabbath, and because the tomb
was close by, they placed Jesus there.



The two men took Jesus' body

The Empty Tomb

(Also Matt. 28.1–8; Mark 16.1–8; Luke 24.1–12)

20 Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark,
Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that
the stone had been taken away from the entrance. [2]She
ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple,
whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the
Lord from the tomb and we don't know where they have
put him!"

[3]Then Peter and the other disciple left and went to the
tomb. [4]The two of them were running, but the other
disciple ran faster than Peter and reached the tomb first.
[5]He bent over and saw the linen cloths, but he did not
go in. [6]Behind him came Simon Peter, and he went
straight into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying
there [7]and the cloth which had been around Jesus' head.
It was not lying with the linen cloths but was rolled up
by itself. [8]Then the other disciple, who had reached the
tomb first, also went in; he saw and believed. [9](They still
did not understand the scripture which said that he must
rise from death.) [10]Then the disciples went back home.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

(Also Matt. 28.9–10; Mark 16.9–11)

[11]Mary stood crying outside the tomb. Still crying,
she bent over and looked in the tomb, [12]and saw two
angels there, dressed in white, sitting where the body of
Jesus had been, one at the head, the other at the feet.
[13]"Woman, why are you crying?" they asked her.

She answered, "They have taken my Lord away, and
I do not know where they have put him!"

[14]When she had said this, she turned around and
saw Jesus standing there; but she did not know that it
was Jesus. [15]"Woman, why are you crying?" Jesus
asked her. "Who is it that you are looking for?"

She thought he was the gardener, so she said to him,
"If you took him away, sir, tell me where you have put
him, and I will go and get him."

[16]Jesus said to her, "Mary!"

She turned toward him and said in Hebrew, "Rab-
boni!" (This means "Teacher.")

[17]"Do not hold on to me," Jesus told her, "because
I have not yet gone back up to the Father. But go to
my brothers and tell them for me, 'I go back up to him
who is my Father and your Father, my God and your
God.'"

[18]So Mary Magdalene went and told the disciples
that she had seen the Lord, and that he had told her
this.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

(Also Matt. 28.16–20; Mark 16.14–18; Luke 24.36–49)

[19]It was late that Sunday evening, and the disciples
were gathered together behind locked doors, because
they were afraid of the Jewish authorities. Then Jesus
came and stood among them. "Peace be with you," he
said. [20]After saying this, he showed them his hands and
his side. The disciples were filled with joy at seeing the
Lord. [21]Then Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with
you. As the Father sent me, so I send you." [22]He said
this, and then he breathed on them and said, "Receive
the Holy Spirit. [23]If you forgive men's sins, they are
forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not for-
given."

He showed them his hands

Jesus and Thomas

[24]One of the twelve disciples, Thomas (called the Twin), was not with them when Jesus came. [25]So the other disciples told him, "We saw the Lord!"

Thomas said to them, "If I do not see the scars of the nails in his hands, and put my finger on those scars, and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

[26]A week later the disciples were together indoors again, and Thomas was with them. The doors were locked, but Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." [27]Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands; then stretch out your hand and put it in my side. Stop your doubting, and believe!"

[28]Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

[29]Jesus said to him, "Do you believe because you see me? How happy are those who believe without seeing me!"

The Purpose of This Book

[30]Jesus did many other mighty works in his disciples' presence which are not written down in this book. [31]These have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through this faith you may have life in his name.

Jesus Appears to Seven Disciples

21 After this, Jesus showed himself once more to his disciples at Lake Tiberias. This is how he did it.
2 Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael
(the one from Cana in Galilee), the sons of Zebedee, and
two other disciples of Jesus were all together. 3 Simon
Peter said to the others, "I am going fishing."

Simon Peter went aboard and dragged the net ashore

"We will come with you," they told him. So they went and got into the boat; but all that night they did not catch a thing. [4]As the sun was rising, Jesus stood at the water's edge, but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. [5]Then he said to them, "Young men, haven't you caught anything?"

"Not a thing," they answered.

[6]He said to them, "Throw your net out on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they threw the net out, and could not pull it back in, because they had caught so many fish.

[7]The disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken his clothes off) and jumped into the water. [8]The other disciples came to shore in the boat, pulling the net full of fish. They were not very far from land, about a hundred yards away. [9]When they stepped ashore they saw a charcoal fire there with fish on it, and some bread. [10]Then Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught."

[11]Simon Peter went aboard and dragged the net ashore, full of big fish, a hundred and fifty-three in all; even though there were so many, still the net did not tear. [12]Jesus said to them, "Come and eat." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord. [13]So Jesus went over, took the bread, and gave it to them; he did the same with the fish.

[14]This, then, was the third time Jesus showed himself to the disciples after he was raised from death.

Jesus and Peter

[15]After they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?"

"Yes, Lord," he answered, "you know that I love you."

Jesus said to him, "Take care of my lambs." [16]A second time Jesus said to him, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"

"Yes, Lord," he answered, "you know that I love you."

Jesus said to him, "Take care of my sheep." [17]A third time Jesus said, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?"

Peter became sad because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" and said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you!"

Jesus said to him, "Take care of my sheep. [18]I tell you the truth: when you were young you used to fasten your belt and go anywhere you wanted to; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands and someone else will tie them and take you where you don't want to go." [19](In saying this Jesus was indicating the way in which Peter would die and bring glory to God.) Then Jesus said to him, "Follow me!"

Jesus and the Other Disciple

[20]Peter turned around and saw behind him that other disciple, whom Jesus loved—the one who had leaned close to Jesus at the meal and asked, "Lord, who is going to betray you?" [21]When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about this man?"

[22]Jesus answered him, "If I want him to live until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!"

[23]So a report spread among the followers of Jesus that this disciple would not die. But Jesus did not say that he

And take you where you don't want to go

would not die; he said, "If I want him to live until I come, what is that to you?"

[24]He is the disciple who spoke of these things, the one who also wrote them down; and we know that what he said is true.

Conclusion

[25]Now, there are many other things that Jesus did. If they were all written down one by one, I suppose that the whole world could not hold the books that would be written.

The whole world could not hold the books

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

1 Dear Theophilus:
In my first book I wrote about all the things that Jesus did and taught, from the time he began his work [2]until the day he was taken up to heaven. Before he was taken up he gave instructions by the power of the Holy Spirit to the men he had chosen as his apostles. [3]For forty days after his death he showed himself to them many times, in ways that proved beyond doubt that he was alive; he was seen by them, and talked with them about the Kingdom of God. [4]And when they came together, he gave them this order, "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, that I told you about. [5]John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

Jesus Is Taken up to Heaven

[6]When the apostles met together with Jesus they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time give the Kingdom back to Israel?"

[7]Jesus said to them, "The times and occasions are set by my Father's own authority, and it is not for you to know when they will be. [8]But you will be filled with power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." [9]After saying this, he was taken up to heaven as they watched him; and a cloud hid him from their sight.

[10]They still had their eyes fixed on the sky as he went away, when two men dressed in white suddenly stood beside them. [11]"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand there looking up at the sky? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come back in the same way that you saw him go to heaven."

Judas' Successor

[12]Then the apostles went back to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, which is about half a mile away from the city. [13]They entered Jerusalem and went up to the

room where they were staying: Peter, John, James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James, the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Patriot, and Judas, the son of James. [14]They gathered frequently to pray as a group, together with the women, and with Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

[15]A few days later there was a meeting of the believers, about one hundred and twenty in all, and Peter stood up to speak. [16]"My brothers," he said, "the scripture had to come true in which the Holy Spirit, speaking through David, predicted about Judas, who was the guide of those who arrested Jesus. [17]Judas was a member of our group, because he had been chosen to have a part in our work."

[18](With the money that Judas got for his evil act he bought a field, where he fell to his death; he burst open and all his insides spilled out. [19]All the people living in Jerusalem heard about it, and so in their own language they call that field Akeldama, which means "Field of Blood.")

[20]"For it is written in the book of Psalms,

'May his house become empty;
let no one live in it.'

It is also written,

'May someone else take his place of service.'

[21-22]"So then, someone must join us as a witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He must be one of those who were in our group during the whole time that the Lord Jesus traveled about with us, beginning from the time John preached his baptism until the day Jesus was taken up from us to heaven."

[23]So they proposed two men: Joseph, who was called Barsabbas (he was also called Justus), and Matthias. [24]Then they prayed, "Lord, you know the hearts of all men. And so, Lord, show us which one of these two you have chosen [25]to take this place of service as an apostle which Judas left to go to the place where he belongs." [26]Then they drew lots to choose between the two names. The name chosen was that of Matthias, and he was added to the group of the eleven apostles.

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

2 When the day of Pentecost arrived, all the believers were gathered together in one place. [2]Suddenly there was a noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. [3]Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire spreading out; and each person there was touched by a tongue. [4]They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other languages, as the Spirit enabled them to speak.

[5]There were Jews living in Jerusalem, religious men who had come from every country in the world. [6]When they heard this noise, a large crowd gathered. They were all excited, because each one of them heard the believers talking in his own language. [7]In amazement and wonder they exclaimed, "These men who are talking like this—they are all Galileans! [8]How is it, then, that all of us hear them speaking in our own native language? [9]We are from Parthia, Media, and Elam; from Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia; from Pontus and Asia, [10]from Phrygia and Pamphylia, from Egypt and the regions of Libya near Cyrene; some of us are from Rome, [11]both Jews and Gentiles converted to Judaism; and some of us are from Crete and Arabia yet all of us hear them speaking in our own languages of the great things that God has done!" [12]Amazed and confused they all kept asking each other, "What does this mean?"

[13]But others made fun of the believers, saying, "These men are drunk!"

Peter's Message

[14]Then Peter stood up with the other eleven apostles, and in a loud voice began to speak to the crowd, "Fellow Jews, and all of you who live in Jerusalem, listen to me and let me tell you what this means. [15]These men are not drunk, as you suppose; it is only nine o'clock in the morning. [16]Rather, this is what the prophet Joel spoke about,

[17] 'This is what I will do in the last days, God
says:

Listen to me

I will pour out my Spirit upon all men.
Your sons and your daughters will
prophesy;
your young men will see visions,
and your old men will dream dreams.
18 Yes, even on my slaves, both men and
women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.
19 I will perform miracles in the sky above,
and marvels on the earth below.
There will be blood, fire, and thick smoke;
20 the sun will become dark,
and the moon red as blood,
before the great and glorious Day of the
Lord arrives.
21 And then, whoever calls on the name of
the Lord will be saved.'

22"Listen to these words, men of Israel! Jesus of Nazareth was a man whose divine mission was clearly shown to you by the miracles, wonders, and signs which

God did through him; you yourselves know this, for it
took place here among you. [23]God, in his own will and
knowledge, had already decided that Jesus would be
handed over to you; and you killed him, by letting sinful
men nail him to the cross. [24]But God raised him from
the dead; he set him free from the pains of death, be-
cause it was impossible that death should hold him pris-
oner. [25]For David said about him,

'I saw the Lord before me at all times;
he is by my right side, so that I will not
be troubled.
[26] Because of this my heart is glad
and my words are full of joy;
and I, mortal though I am,
will rest assured in hope,
[27] because you will not abandon my soul in
the world of the dead;
you will not allow your devoted servant
to suffer decay.
[28] You have shown me the paths that lead to
life,
and by your presence you will fill me
with joy.'

[29]"Brothers: I must speak to you quite plainly about
our patriarch David. He died and was buried, and his
grave is here with us to this very day. [30]He was a
prophet, and he knew God's promise to him: God made
a vow that he would make one of David's descendants
a king, just as David was. [31]David saw what God was
going to do, and so he spoke about the resurrection of
the Messiah when he said,

'He was not abandoned in the world of the
dead;
his flesh did not decay.'

[32]God has raised this very Jesus from the dead, and
we are all witnesses to this fact. [33]He has been raised to
the right side of God and received from him the Holy
Spirit, as his Father had promised; and what you now
see and hear is his gift that he has poured out on us.
[34]For David himself did not go up into heaven; rather
he said,

'The Lord said to my Lord:
Sit here at my right side,

35 until I put your enemies as a footstool
under your feet.'

36"All the people of Israel, then, are to know for sure that it is this Jesus, whom you nailed to the cross, that God has made Lord and Messiah!"

37When the people heard this, they were deeply troubled, and said to Peter and the other apostles, "What shall we do, brothers?"

38Peter said to them, "Turn away from your sins, each one of you, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins will be forgiven; and you will receive God's gift, the Holy Spirit. 39For God's promise was made to you and your children, and to all who are far away—all whom the Lord our God calls to himself."

40Peter made his appeal to them and with many other words he urged them, saying, "Save yourselves from the punishment coming to this wicked people!" 41Many of them believed his message and were baptized; about three thousand people were added to the group that day. 42They spent their time in learning from the apostles, taking part in the fellowship, and sharing in the fellowship meals and the prayers.

Life among the Believers

43Many miracles and wonders were done through the apostles, and this caused everyone to be filled with awe. 44All the believers continued together in close fellowship and shared their belongings with one another. 45They would sell their property and possessions and distribute the money among all, according to what each one needed. 46Every day they continued to meet as a group in the temple, and they had their meals together in their homes, eating the food with glad and humble hearts, 47praising God, and enjoying the good will of all the people. And every day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved.

The Lame Man Healed

3 One day Peter and John went to the temple at three o'clock in the afternoon, the hour for prayers. 2There, at the "Beautiful Gate," as it was called, was a

He looked at them, expecting to get something

man who had been lame all his life. Every day he was carried to this gate to beg for money from the people who were going into the temple. [3]When he saw Peter and John going in, he begged them to give him something. [4]They looked straight at him and Peter said, "Look at us!" [5]So he looked at them, expecting to get something from them. [6]Peter said to him, "I have no money at all, but I will give you what I have: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth I order you to walk!" [7]Then he took him by his right hand and helped him up. At once the man's feet and ankles became strong; [8]he jumped up, stood on his feet, and started walking around. Then he went into the temple with them, walking and jumping and praising God. [9]The whole crowd saw him walking and praising God; [10]and when they recognized him as the beggar who sat at the temple's "Beautiful Gate," they were all filled with surprise and amazement at what had happened to him.

Peter's Message in the Temple

[11]As the man held on to Peter and John, all the people were amazed and ran to them in "Solomon's Porch," as it was called. [12]When Peter saw the people, he said to

them, "Men of Israel, why are you surprised at this, and why do you stare at us? Do you think that it was by means of our own power or godliness that we made this man walk? [13]The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our ancestors, has given divine glory to his Servant Jesus. You handed him over to the authorities, and you rejected him in Pilate's presence, even after Pilate had decided to set him free. [14]He was holy and good, but you rejected him and instead you asked Pilate to do you the favor of turning loose a murderer. [15]And so you killed the one who leads men to life. But God raised him from the dead—and we are witnesses to this. [16]It was the power of his name that gave strength to this lame man. What you see and know was done by faith in his name; it was faith in Jesus that made him well like this before you all.

[17]"And now, my brothers, I know that what you and your leaders did to Jesus was done because of your ignorance. [18]God long ago announced by means of all the prophets that his Messiah had to suffer; and he made it come true in this way. [19]Repent, then, and turn to God, so that he will wipe away your sins, [20]so that times of spiritual strength may come from the Lord's presence, and that he may send Jesus, who is the Messiah he has already chosen for you. [21]He must remain in heaven until the time comes for all things to be made new, as God announced by means of his holy prophets of long ago. [22]For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will send you a prophet, just as he sent me, who will be of your own people. You must listen to everything that he tells you. [23]Anyone who does not listen to what that prophet says will be separated from God's people and destroyed.' [24]And the prophets, including Samuel and those who came after him, all of them who had a message, also announced these present days. [25]The promises of God through his prophets are for you, and you share in the covenant which God made with your ancestors. As he said to Abraham, 'Through your descendants I will bless all the people on earth.' [26]And so God chose and sent his Servant to you first, to bless you by making all of you turn away from your wicked ways."

Peter and John before the Council

4 Peter and John were still speaking to the people
when the priests, the officer in charge of the temple
guards, and the Sadducees came to them. 2They were
annoyed because the two apostles were teaching the
people that Jesus had risen from death, which proved
that the dead will rise to life. 3So they arrested them and
put them in jail until the next day, since it was already
late. 4But many who heard the message believed; and
the number of men came to about five thousand.

5The next day the Jewish leaders, the elders, and the
teachers of the Law gathered in Jerusalem. 6They met
with the High Priest Annas, and Caiaphas, and John,
and Alexander, and the others who belonged to the
High Priest's family. 7They made the apostles stand
before them and asked them, "How did you do this?
What power do you have, or whose name did you
use?"

8Peter, full of the Holy Spirit, answered them,
"Leaders of the people and elders: 9if we are being
questioned today about the good deed done to the
lame man and how he was made well, 10then you
should all know, and all the people of Israel should
know, that this man stands here before you completely
well by the power of the name of Jesus Christ of
Nazareth—whom you crucified and God raised from
death. 11Jesus is the one of whom the scripture says,

> 'The stone that you the builders despised
> turned out to be the most important
> stone.'

12Salvation is to be found through him alone; for there
is no one else in all the world, whose name God has
given to men, by whom we can be saved."

13The members of the Council were amazed to see
how bold Peter and John were, and to learn that they
were ordinary men of no education. They realized then
that they had been companions of Jesus. 14But there
was nothing that they could say, because they saw the
man who had been made well standing there with Pe-
ter and John. 15So they told them to leave the Council
room, and started discussing among themselves.
16"What shall we do with these men?" they asked.

"Everyone living in Jerusalem knows that this extraordinary miracle has been performed by them, and we cannot deny it. 17But to keep this matter from spreading any further among the people, let us warn these men never again to speak to anyone in the name of Jesus."

18So they called them back in and told them that under no condition were they to speak or to teach in the name of Jesus. 19But Peter and John answered them, "You yourselves judge which is right in God's sight, to obey you or to obey God. 20For we cannot stop speaking of what we ourselves have seen and heard." 21The Council warned them even more strongly, and then set them free. They could find no reason for punishing them, because the people were all praising God for what had happened. 22The man on whom this miracle of healing had been performed was over forty years old.

The Believers Pray for Boldness

23As soon as they were set free, Peter and John returned to their group and told them what the chief priests and the elders had said. 24When they heard it, they all joined together in prayer to God: "Master and Creator of heaven, earth, and sea, and all that is in them! 25By means of the Holy Spirit you spoke through our ancestor David, your servant, when he said,

'Why were the Gentiles furious;
why did the peoples plot in vain?
26The kings of the earth prepared themselves,
and the rulers met together
against the Lord and his Messiah.'

27For indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together in this city with the Gentiles and the people of Israel against Jesus, your holy Servant, whom you made Messiah. 28They gathered to do everything that you, by your power and will, had already decided would take place. 29And now, Lord, take notice of the threats they made and allow us, your servants, to speak your message with all boldness. 30Stretch out your hand to heal, and grant that wonders and miracles may be performed through the name of your holy Servant Jesus."

[31]When they finished praying, the place where they were meeting was shaken. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak God's message with boldness.

All Things Together

[32]The group of believers was one in mind and heart. No one said that any of his belongings was his own, but they all shared with one another everything they had. [33]With great power the apostles gave witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God poured rich blessings on them all. [34]There was no one in the group who was in need. Those who owned fields or houses would sell them, bring the money received from the sale [35]and turn it over to the apostles; and the money was distributed to each one according to his need.

[36]And so it was that Joseph, a Levite born in Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means "One who Encourages"), [37]sold a field he owned, brought the money, and turned it over to the apostles.

Ananias and Sapphira

5 But there was a man named Ananias, whose wife was named Sapphira. He sold some property that belonged to them, [2]but kept part of the money for himself, as his wife knew, and turned the rest over to the apostles. [3]Peter said to him, "Ananias, why did you let Satan take control of your heart and make you lie to the Holy Spirit by keeping part of the money you received for the property? [4]Before you sold the property it belonged to you, and after you sold it the money was yours. Why, then, did you decide in your heart that you would do such a thing? You have not lied to men—you have lied to God!" [5]As soon as Ananias heard this he fell down dead; and all who heard about it were filled with fear. [6]The young men came in, wrapped up his body, took him out, and buried him.

[7]About three hours later his wife came in, but she did not know what had happened. [8]Peter said to her, "Tell me, was this the full amount you and your husband received for your property?"

"Yes," she answered, "the full amount."

[9]So Peter said to her, "Why did you and your husband decide to put the Lord's Spirit to the test? The men who buried your husband are at the door right now, and they will carry you out too!" [10]At once she fell down at his feet and died. The young men came in and saw that she was dead, so they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. [11]The whole church and all the others who heard of this were filled with great fear.

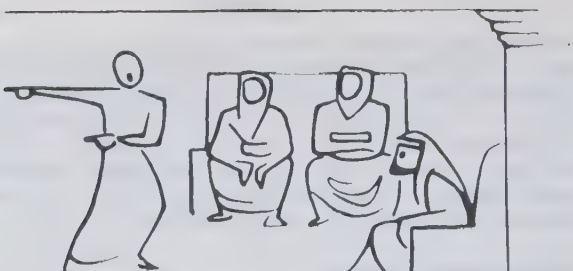
Miracles and Wonders

[12]Many miracles and wonders were being performed among the people by the apostles. All the believers met together in a group in Solomon's Porch. [13]Nobody outside the group dared join them, even though the people spoke highly of them. [14]But more and more people were added to the group—a crowd of men and women who believed in the Lord. [15]As a result of what the apostles were doing, the sick people were carried out in the streets and placed on beds and mats so that, when Peter walked by, at least his shadow might fall on some of them. [16]And crowds of people came in from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those who had evil spirits in them; and they were all healed.

The Apostles Persecuted

[17]Then the High Priest and all his companions, members of the local party of the Sadducees, became extremely jealous of the apostles; so they decided to take action. [18]They arrested the apostles and placed them in the public jail. [19]But that night an angel of the Lord opened the prison gates, led the apostles out, and said to them, [20]"Go and stand in the temple, and tell the people all about this new life." [21]The apostles obeyed, and at dawn they entered the temple and started teaching.

The High Priest and his companions called together all the Jewish elders for a full meeting of the Council; then they sent orders to the prison to have the apostles brought before them. [22]But when the officials arrived, they did not find the apostles in prison; so they returned to the Council and reported, [23]"When we arrived at the jail we found it locked up tight and all the guards on



Listen!

watch at the gates; but when we opened the gates we did not find anyone inside!" [24]When the officer in charge of the temple guards and the chief priests heard this, they wondered what had happened to the apostles. [25]Then a man came in who said to them, "Listen! The men you put in prison are standing in the temple teaching the people!" [26]So the officer went off with his men and brought the apostles back. They did not use force, however, because they were afraid that the people might stone them.

[27]They brought the apostles in and made them stand before the Council, and the High Priest questioned them. [28]"We gave you strict orders not to teach in the name of this man," he said; "but see what you have done! You have spread your teaching all over Jerusalem, and you want to make us responsible for his death!"

[29]Peter and the other apostles answered back, "We must obey God, not men. [30]The God of our fathers raised Jesus from death, after you had killed him by nailing him to a cross. [31]God raised him to his right side as Leader and Savior, to give to the people of Israel the opportunity to repent and have their sins forgiven. [32]We are witnesses to these things—we and the Holy Spirit, who is God's gift to those who obey him."

[33]When the members of the Council heard this they were so furious that they decided to have the apostles put to death. [34]But one of them, a Pharisee named

Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law who was highly respected by all the people, stood up in the Council. He ordered the apostles to be taken out, [35]and then said to the Council, "Men of Israel, be careful what you are about to do to these men. [36]Some time ago Theudas appeared, claiming that he was somebody great; and about four hundred men joined him. But he was killed, all his followers were scattered, and his movement died out. [37]After this, Judas the Galilean appeared during the time of the census; he also drew a crowd after him, but he also was killed and all his followers were scattered. [38]And so in this case now, I tell you, do not take any action against these men. Leave them alone, because if this plan and work of theirs is a man-made thing, it will disappear; [39]but if it comes from God you cannot possibly defeat them. You could find yourselves fighting against God!"

The Council followed Gamaliel's advice. [40]They called the apostles in, had them whipped, and ordered them never again to speak in the name of Jesus; and then they set them free. [41]The apostles left the Council, full of joy that God had considered them worthy to suffer disgrace for the name of Jesus. [42]And every day in the temple and in people's homes they continued to teach and preach the Good News about Jesus the Messiah.

The Seven Helpers

6 Some time later, as the number of disciples kept growing, there was a quarrel between the Greek-speaking Jews and the native Jews. The Greek-speaking Jews said that their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of funds. [2]So the twelve apostles called the whole group of disciples together and said, "It is not right for us to neglect the preaching of God's word in order to handle finances. [3]So then, brothers, choose seven men among you who are known to be full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, and we will put them in charge of this matter. [4]We ourselves, then, will give our full time to prayers and the work of preaching."

[5]The whole group was pleased with the apostles' proposal; so they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and

the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a Gentile from Antioch who had been converted to Judaism. 6The group presented them to the apostles, who prayed and placed their hands on them.

7And so the word of God continued to spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem grew larger and larger, and a great number of priests accepted the faith.

The Arrest of Stephen

8Stephen, a man richly blessed by God and full of power, performed great miracles and wonders among the people. 9But some men opposed him; they were members of the synagogue of the Free Men (as it was called), which had Jews from Cyrenia and Alexandria. They and other Jews from Cilicia and Asia started arguing with Stephen. 10But the Spirit gave Stephen such wisdom that when he spoke they could not resist him. 11So they bribed some men to say, "We heard him speaking against Moses and against God!" 12In this way they stirred up the people, the elders, and the teachers of the Law. They came to Stephen, seized him, and took him before the Council. 13Then they brought in some men to tell lies about him. "This man," they said, "is always talking against our sacred temple and the Law of Moses. 14We heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will tear down the temple and change all the customs which have come down to us from Moses!" 15All those sitting in the Council fixed their eyes on Stephen and saw that his face looked like the face of an angel.

Stephen's Speech

7 The High Priest asked Stephen, "Is this really so?"

2Stephen answered, "Brothers and fathers! Listen to me! The God of glory appeared to our ancestor Abraham while he was living in Mesopotamia, before he had gone to live in Haran, 3and said to him, 'Leave your family and country and go to the land that I will show you.' 4And so he left the land of Chaldea and went to live in Haran. After Abraham's father died, God made him move to this country, where you now live. 5God did not then give Abraham any part of it as his own, not even a square foot of ground; but God promised that he

would give it to him, and that it would belong to him and his descendants after him. At the time God made this promise Abraham had no children. 6This is what God said to him, 'Your descendants will live in a foreign country, where they will be slaves and will be badly treated for four hundred years. 7But I will pass judgment on the people that they will serve,' God said, 'and afterward they will come out of that country and will worship me in this place.' 8Then God gave to Abraham the ceremony of circumcision as a sign of the covenant. So Abraham circumcised Isaac a week after he was born; Isaac circumcised Jacob, and Jacob circumcised the twelve patriarchs.

9"The patriarchs were jealous of Joseph, and sold him to be a slave in Egypt. But God was with him, 10and brought him safely through all his troubles. When Joseph appeared before Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, God gave him a pleasing manner and wisdom. Pharaoh made Joseph governor over the country and the royal household. 11Then there was a famine in all of Egypt and Canaan, which caused much suffering. Our ancestors could not find any food. 12So when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent his sons, our ancestors, on their first visit there. 13On the second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Pharaoh came to know about Joseph's family. 14So Joseph sent a message to his father Jacob, telling him and the whole family to come to Egypt; there were seventy-five people in all. 15Then Jacob went down to Egypt, where he and our ancestors died. 16Their bodies were moved to Shechem, where they were buried in the grave which Abraham had bought from the tribe of Hamor for a sum of money.

17"When the time drew near for God to keep the promise he had made to Abraham, the number of our people in Egypt had grown much larger. 18At last a different king, who had not known Joseph, began to rule in Egypt. 19He tricked our people and was cruel to our ancestors, forcing them to put their babies out of their homes, so that they would die. 20It was at this time that Moses was born, a very beautiful child. He was brought up at home for three months, 21and when he was put out of his home the daughter of Pharaoh

adopted him and brought him up as her own son. [22]He
was taught all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and
became a great man in words and deeds.
[23]"When Moses was forty years old he decided to
visit his fellow Israelites. [24]He saw one of them being
mistreated by an Egyptian; so he went to his help and
took revenge on the Egyptian by killing him. [25](He
thought that his own people would understand that
God was going to use him to set them free; but they
did not understand.) [26]The next day he saw two Israel-
ites fighting, and he tried to make peace between them.
'Listen, men,' he said, 'you are brothers; why do you
mistreat each other?' [27]But the one who was mistreat-
ing the other pushed Moses aside. 'Who made you
ruler and judge over us?' he asked. [28]'Do you want to
kill me, just as you killed that Egyptian yesterday?'
[29]When Moses heard this he fled from Egypt and
started living in the land of Midian. There he had two
sons.
[30]"After forty years had passed, an angel appeared
to Moses in the flames of a burning bush in the desert
near Mount Sinai. [31]Moses was amazed by what he
saw, and went near the bush to look at it closely. But
he heard the Lord's voice: [32]'I am the God of your
ancestors, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.'
Moses trembled with fear and dared not look. [33]The
Lord said to him, 'Take your sandals off, for the place
where you are standing is holy ground. [34]I have looked
and seen the cruel suffering of my people in Egypt. I
have heard their groans, and I have come down to save
them. Come now, I will send you to Egypt.'
[35]"Moses is the one who was rejected by the people
of Israel. 'Who made you ruler and judge over us?'
they asked. He is the one whom God sent as ruler and
savior, with the help of the angel who appeared to him
in the burning bush. [36]He led the people out of Egypt,
performing miracles and wonders in Egypt and the
Red Sea, and in the desert for forty years. [37]Moses is
the one who said to the people of Israel, 'God will
send you a prophet, just as he sent me, who will be of
your own people.' [38]He is the one who was with the
people of Israel assembled in the desert; he was there
with our ancestors and with the angel who spoke to

him on Mount Sinai; he received God's living messages to pass on to us.

39-40"But our ancestors refused to obey him; they pushed him aside and wished that they could go back to Egypt. So they said to Aaron, 'Make us some gods who will go in front of us. We do not know what has happened to that Moses who brought us out of Egypt.' 41It was then that they made an idol in the shape of a calf, offered sacrifice to it, and had a feast to celebrate what they themselves had made. 42But God turned away from them, and gave them over to worship the stars of heaven, as it is written in the book of the prophets,

'People of Israel! It was not to me
that you slaughtered and sacrificed animals
for forty years in the desert.
43 It was the tent of the god Moloch that you carried,
and the image of the star of your god Rephan;
they were idols that you had made to worship.
And so I will send you away beyond Babylon.'

44"Our ancestors had the tent of God's presence with them in the desert. It had been made as God had told Moses to make it, according to the pattern that Moses had been shown. 45Later on, our ancestors who received the tent from their fathers carried it with them when they went with Joshua and took over the land from the nations that God drove out before them. And it stayed there until the time of David. 46He won God's favor, and asked God to allow him to provide a house for the God of Jacob. 47But it was Solomon who built him a house.

48"But the Most High God does not live in houses built by men; as the prophet says,

49 'Heaven is my throne, says the Lord,
and earth is my footstool.
What kind of house would you build for me?
Where is the place for me to rest?

50 Did not I myself make all these things?'
51 "How stubborn you are! How heathen your hearts,
how deaf you are to God's message! You are just like
your ancestors: you too have always resisted the Holy
Spirit! 52 Was there any prophet that your ancestors did
not persecute? They killed God's messengers, who
long ago announced the coming of his righteous Serv-
ant. And now you have betrayed and murdered him.
53 You are the ones who received God's law, that was
handed down by angels—yet you have not obeyed it!"

The Stoning of Stephen

54 As the members of the Council listened to Stephen
they became furious and ground their teeth at him in
anger. 55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up
to heaven and saw God's glory, and Jesus standing at
the right side of God. 56 "Look!" he said. "I see heaven
opened and the Son of Man standing at the right side of
God!"

They threw him out of the city and stoned him

57 With a loud cry they covered their ears with their
hands. Then they all rushed together at him at once,
58 threw him out of the city and stoned him. The wit-
nesses left their cloaks in charge of a young man named
Saul. 59 They kept on stoning Stephen as he called on the
Lord, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" 60 He knelt down
and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord! Do not remember
this sin against them!" He said this and died.
8 And Saul approved of his murder.

Saul Persecutes the Church

That very day the church in Jerusalem began to suffer cruel persecution. All the believers, except the apostles, were scattered throughout the provinces of Judea and Samaria. 2 Some devout men buried Stephen, mourning for him with loud cries.

3 But Saul tried to destroy the church; going from house to house, he dragged out the believers, both men and women, and threw them into jail.

The Gospel Preached in Samaria

4 The believers who were scattered went everywhere, preaching the message. 5 Philip went to the city of Samaria and preached the Messiah to the people there. 6 The crowds paid close attention to what Philip said. They all listened to him and saw the miracles that he performed. 7 Evil spirits came out with a loud cry from many people; many paralyzed and lame people were also healed. 8 So there was great joy in Samaria.

9 In that city lived a man named Simon, who for some time had astounded the Samaritans with his magic. He claimed that he was someone great, 10 and everyone in the city, from all classes of society, paid close attention to him. "He is that power of God known as 'The Great Power,'" they said. 11 He had astounded them with his magic for such a long time that they paid close attention to him. 12 But when they believed Philip's message about the Good News of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. 13 Simon himself also believed; and after being baptized he stayed close to Philip, and was astounded when he saw the great wonders and miracles that were being performed.

14The apostles in Jerusalem heard that the people of
Samaria had received the word of God; so they sent
Peter and John to them. 15When they arrived, they
prayed for the believers that they might receive the
Holy Spirit. 16For the Holy Spirit had not yet come
down on any of them; they had only been baptized in
the name of the Lord Jesus. 17Then Peter and John
placed their hands on them, and they received the
Holy Spirit.

18Simon saw that the Spirit had been given to them
when the apostles placed their hands on them. So he
offered money to Peter and John, 19and said, "Give
this power to me too, so that anyone I place my hands
on will receive the Holy Spirit."

20But Peter answered him, "May you and your
money go to hell, for thinking that you can buy God's
gift with money! 21You have no part or share in our
work, because your heart is not right in God's sight.
22Repent, then, from this evil plan of yours, and pray
to the Lord that he will forgive you for thinking such
a thing as this. 23For I see that you are full of bitter
envy, and are a prisoner of sin."

24Simon said to Peter and John, "Please pray to the
Lord for me, so that none of these things you said will
happen to me."

25After they had given their testimony and spoken
the Lord's message, Peter and John went back to
Jerusalem. On their way they preached the Good
News in many villages of Samaria.

Philip and the Ethiopian Official

26An angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, "Get yourself
ready and go south to the road that goes from Jerusalem
to Gaza." (This road is no longer used.) 27-28So Philip
got ready and went. Now an Ethiopian eunuch was on
his way home. This man was an important official in
charge of the treasury of the Queen, or Candace, of
Ethiopia. He had been to Jerusalem to worship God,
and was going back in his carriage. As he rode along he
was reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah. 29The
Holy Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and stay close to
that carriage." 30Philip ran over and heard him reading

from the book of the prophet Isaiah; so he asked him, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

31"How can I understand," the official replied, "unless someone explains it to me?" And he invited Philip to climb up and sit in the carriage with him. 32The passage of scripture which he was reading was this,

"He was like a sheep that is taken to be slaughtered;
he was like a lamb that makes no sound when its wool is cut off;
he did not say a word.
33 He was humiliated, and justice was denied him.
No one will be able to tell about his descendants,
because his life on earth has come to an end."

34The official said to Philip, "Tell me, of whom is the prophet saying this? Of himself or of someone else?" 35Philip began to speak; starting from this very passage of scripture, he told him the Good News about Jesus. 36As they traveled down the road they came to a place where there was some water, and the official said, "Here is some water. What is to keep me from being baptized?"

[37Philip said to him, "You may be baptized if you believe with all your heart."

"I do," he answered; "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."]

38The official ordered the carriage to stop; and both of them, Philip and the official, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. 39When they came up out of the water the Spirit of the Lord took Philip away. The official did not see him again, but continued on his way, full of joy. 40Philip found himself in Ashdod; and he went through all the towns preaching the Good News, until he arrived at Caesarea.

The Conversion of Saul

(Also Acts 22.6–16; 26.12–18)

9 In the meantime Saul kept up his violent threats of murder against the disciples of the Lord. He went to the High Priest 2and asked for letters of introduction

to the Jewish synagogues in Damascus, so that if he should find any followers of the Way of the Lord there, he would be able to arrest them, both men and women, and take them back to Jerusalem.

He fell to the ground

[3]On his way to Damascus, as he came near the city, suddenly a light from the sky flashed around him. [4]He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul! Why do you persecute me?"

[5]"Who are you, Lord?" he asked.

"I am Jesus, whom you persecute," the voice said. [6]"But get up and go into the city, where you will be told what you must do."

[7]The men who were traveling with Saul had stopped, not saying a word; they heard the voice but could not see anyone. [8]Saul got up from the ground and opened his eyes, but could not see a thing. So they took him by the hand and led him into Damascus. [9]For three

days he was not able to see, and during that time he did not eat or drink anything.

[10]There was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. He had a vision, in which the Lord said to him, "Ananias!"

"Here I am, Lord," he answered.

[11]The Lord said to him, "Get ready and go to Straight Street, and at the house of Judas ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is praying, [12]and in a vision he saw a man named Ananias come in and place his hands on him so that he might see again."

[13]Ananias answered: "Lord, many people have told me about this man, about all the terrible things he has done to your people in Jerusalem. [14]And he has come to Damascus with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

[15]The Lord said to him, "Go, because I have chosen him to serve me, to make my name known to Gentiles and kings, and to the people of Israel. [16]And I myself will show him all that he must suffer for my sake."

[17]So Ananias went, entered the house, and placed his hands on Saul. "Brother Saul," he said, "the Lord has sent me—Jesus himself, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here. He sent me so that you might see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." [18]At once something like fish scales fell from Saul's eyes and he was able to see again. He stood up and was baptized; [19]and after he had eaten, his strength came back.

Saul Preaches in Damascus

Saul stayed for a few days with the disciples in Damascus. [20]He went straight to the synagogues and began to preach about Jesus. "He is the Son of God," he said.

[21]All who heard him were amazed, and asked, "Isn't this the man who in Jerusalem was killing those who call on this name? And didn't he come here for the very purpose of arresting them and taking them back to the chief priests?"

[22]But Saul's preaching became even more powerful, and his proofs that Jesus was the Messiah were so con-

vincing that the Jews who lived in Damascus could not answer him.

[23]After many days had gone by, the Jews gathered and made plans to kill Saul; [24]but he was told of what they planned to do. Day and night they watched the city gates in order to kill him. [25]But one night Saul's followers took him and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.

Saul in Jerusalem

[26]Saul went to Jerusalem and tried to join the disciples. They would not believe, however, that he was a disciple, and they were all afraid of him. [27]Then Barnabas came to his help and took him to the apostles. He explained to them how Saul had seen the Lord on the road, and that the Lord had spoken to him. He also told them how boldly Saul had preached in the name of Jesus in Damascus. [28]And so Saul stayed with them and went all over Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. [29]He also talked and disputed with the Greek-speaking Jews, but they tried to kill him. [30]When the brothers found out about this, they took Saul down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

[31]And so it was that the church throughout all of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had a time of peace. It was built up and grew in numbers through the help of the Holy Spirit, as it lived in reverence for the Lord.

Peter in Lydda and Joppa

[32]Peter traveled everywhere, and one time he went to visit God's people who lived in Lydda. [33]There he met a man named Aeneas, who was paralyzed and had not been able to get out of bed for eight years. [34]"Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ makes you well. Get up and make your bed." At once Aeneas got up. [35]All the people living in Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

[36]In Joppa there was a woman named Tabitha, who was a believer. (Her name in Greek is Dorcas, meaning a deer.) She spent all her time doing good and helping the poor. [37]At that time she got sick and died. Her body

was washed and laid in a room upstairs. [38]Joppa was not very far from Lydda, and when the disciples in Joppa heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him with the message, "Please hurry and come to us." [39]So Peter got ready and went with them. When he arrived he was taken to the room upstairs. All the widows crowded around him, crying and showing him the shirts and coats that Dorcas had made while she was alive. [40]Peter put them all out of the room, and knelt down and prayed; then he turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, get up!" She opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. [41]Peter reached over and helped her get up. Then he called the believers and the widows, and presented her alive to them. [42]The news about this spread all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord. [43]Peter stayed on in Joppa for many days with a leatherworker named Simon.

Peter and Cornelius

10 There was a man in Caesarea named Cornelius, a captain in the Roman army regiment called "The Italian Regiment." [2]He was a religious man; he and his whole family worshiped God. He did much to help the Jewish poor people, and was constantly praying to God. [3]It was about three o'clock one afternoon when he had a vision, in which he clearly saw an angel of God come in and say to him, "Cornelius!"

[4]He stared at the angel in fear and said, "What is it, sir?"

The angel answered, "God has accepted your prayers and works of charity, and has remembered you. [5]And now send some men to Joppa to call for a certain man whose full name is Simon Peter. [6]He is a guest in the home of a leatherworker named Simon, who lives by the sea." [7]Then the angel who was speaking to him went away, and Cornelius called two of his house servants and a soldier, a religious man who was one of his personal attendants. [8]He told them what had happened and sent them off to Joppa.

[9]The next day, as they were on their way and coming near Joppa, Peter went up on the roof of the house about noon in order to pray. [10]He became hungry, and wanted

to eat; while the food was being prepared he had a vision. [11]He saw heaven opened and something coming down that looked like a large sheet being lowered by its four corners to the earth. [12]In it were all kinds of animals, reptiles, and wild birds. [13]A voice said to him, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat!"

[14]But Peter said, "Certainly not, Lord! I have never eaten anything considered defiled or unclean."

[15]The voice spoke to him again, "Do not consider anything unclean that God has declared clean." [16]This happened three times; and then the thing was taken back up into heaven.

[17]Peter was wondering about the meaning of this vision that he had seen. In the meantime the men sent by Cornelius had learned where Simon's house was, and were now standing in front of the gate. [18]They called out and asked, "Is there a guest here by the name of Simon Peter?"

[19]Peter was still trying to understand what the vision meant, when the Spirit said, "Listen! Three men are here looking for you. [20]So get yourself ready and go down, and do not hesitate to go with them, because I have sent them." [21]So Peter went down and said to the men, "I am the man you are looking for. Why have you come?"

[22]"Captain Cornelius sent us," they answered. "He is a good man who worships God and is highly respected by all the Jewish people. He was told by one of God's angels to invite you to his house, so that he could hear what you have to say." [23]Peter invited the men in and had them spend the night there.

The next day he got ready and went with them; and some of the brothers from Joppa went along with him. [24]The following day he arrived in Caesarea, where Cornelius was waiting for him, together with relatives and close friends that he had invited. [25]As Peter was about to go in, Cornelius met him, fell at his feet, and bowed down before him. [26]But Peter made him rise. "Stand up," he said, "because I myself am only a man." [27]Peter kept on talking to Cornelius as he went into the house, where he found many people gathered. [28]He said to them, "You yourselves know very well

"Stand up," he said, "because I myself am only a man"

that a Jew is not allowed by his religion to visit or associate with a Gentile. But God has shown me that I must not consider any man unclean or defiled. [29]And so when you sent for me I came without any objection. I ask you, then, why did you send for me?"

[30]Cornelius said, "It was about this time three days ago that I was praying in my house at three o'clock in the afternoon. Suddenly a man dressed in shining clothes stood in front of me [31]and said: 'Cornelius! God has heard your prayer, and has remembered your works of charity. [32]Send someone to Joppa to call for a man whose full name is Simon Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the leatherworker, who lives by the sea.' [33]And so I sent for you at once, and you have been good enough to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God, waiting to hear anything that the Lord has ordered you to say."

Peter's Speech

[34]Peter began to speak: "I now realize that it is true that God treats all men on the same basis. [35]Whoever fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him, no matter what race he belongs to. [36]You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, proclaiming the Good News of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all men. [37]You know of the great event that took place throughout all the land of Israel, beginning in Galilee, after the baptism that John preached. [38]You know about

Jesus of Nazareth, how God poured out on him the
Holy Spirit and power. He went everywhere, doing good
and healing all who were under the power of the Devil,
because God was with him. [39]We are witnesses of all
that he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem.
They put him to death by nailing him to the cross. [40]But
God raised him from death on the third day, and caused
him to appear, [41]not to all the people, but only to us who
are the witnesses that God had already chosen. We ate
and drank with him after he rose from death. [42]And he
commanded us to preach the gospel to the people, and
to testify that he is the one whom God has appointed
judge of the living and the dead. [43]All the prophets
spoke about him, saying that everyone who believes in
him will have his sins forgiven through the power of his
name."

The Gentiles Receive the Holy Spirit

[44]While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit came
down on all those who were listening to the message.
[45]The Jewish believers who had come from Joppa with
Peter were amazed that God had poured out his gift of
the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles also. [46]For they heard
them speaking in strange tongues and praising God's
greatness. Peter spoke up, [47]"These people have re-
ceived the Holy Spirit, just as we also did. Can anyone,
then, stop them from being baptized with water?" [48]So
he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus
Christ. Then they asked him to stay with them for a few
days.

Peter's Report to the Church at Jerusalem

11 The apostles and the brothers throughout all of
Judea heard that the Gentiles also had re-
ceived the word of God. [2]When Peter went up to
Jerusalem, those who were in favor of circumcising
Gentiles criticized him, [3]"You were a guest in the home
of uncircumcised Gentiles, and you even ate with
them!" [4]So Peter gave them a full account of what had
happened, from the very beginning:

[5]"I was praying in the city of Joppa, and I had a vision.
I saw something coming down that looked like a large

sheet being lowered by its four corners from heaven, and it stopped next to me. [6]I looked closely inside and saw animals, beasts, reptiles, and wild birds. [7]Then I heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat!' [8]But I said, 'Certainly not, Lord! No defiled or unclean food has ever entered my mouth.' [9]The voice spoke again from heaven, 'Do not consider anything unclean that God has declared clean.' [10]This happened three times, and finally the whole thing was drawn back up into heaven. [11]At that very moment three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea arrived at the house where I was staying. [12]The Spirit told me to go with them without hesitation.These six brothers from Joppa also went with me to Caesarea, and we all went into the house of Cornelius. [13]He told us how he had seen an angel standing in his house who said to him, 'Send someone to Joppa to call for a man whose full name is Simon Peter. [14]He will speak words to you by which you and all your family will be saved.' [15]And when I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came down on them just as on us at the beginning. [16]Then I remembered what the Lord had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' [17]It is clear that God gave those Gentiles the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ; who was I, then, to try to stop God!"

[18]When they heard this, they stopped their criticism and praised God, saying, "Then God has given to the Gentiles also the opportunity to repent and live!"

The Church at Antioch

[19]The believers were scattered by the persecution which took place when Stephen was killed. Some of them went as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message to Jews only. [20]But some of the believers, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and proclaimed the message to Gentiles also, telling them the Good News about the Lord Jesus. [21]The Lord's power was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

[22]The news about this reached the church in Jerusalem, so they sent Barnabas to Antioch. [23]When he ar-

rived and saw how God had blessed the people, he was glad and urged them all to be faithful and true to the Lord with all their hearts. [24]Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith. Many people were brought to the Lord.

[25]Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul. [26]When he found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year the two met with the people of the church and taught a large group. It was at Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians.

[27]About that time some prophets went down from Jerusalem to Antioch. [28]One of them, named Agabus, stood up and by the power of the Spirit predicted that a great famine was about to come over all the earth. (It came when Claudius was Emperor.) [29]The disciples decided that each of them would send as much as he could to help their brothers who lived in Judea. [30]They did this, then, and sent the money to the church elders by Barnabas and Saul.

More Persecution

12 About this time King Herod began to persecute some members of the church. [2]He had James, the brother of John, put to death by the sword. [3]When he saw that this pleased the Jews, he went ahead and had Peter arrested. (This happened during the time of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.) [4]After his arrest Peter was put in jail, where he was handed over to be guarded by four groups of four soldiers each. Herod planned to put him on trial in public after Passover. [5]So Peter was kept in jail, but the people of the church were praying earnestly to God for him.

Peter Set Free from Prison

[6]The night before Herod was going to bring him out to the people, Peter was sleeping between two guards. He was tied with two chains, and there were guards on duty at the prison gate. [7]Suddenly an angel of the Lord stood there, and a light shone in the cell. The angel shook Peter by the shoulder, woke him up, and said, "Hurry! Get up!" At once the chains fell off Peter's hands. [8]Then the angel said, "Tighten your belt and tie

Peter was sleeping between two guards

on your sandals." Peter did so, and the angel said, "Put your cloak around you and come with me." [9]Peter followed him out of the prison. He did not know, however, if what the angel was doing was real; he thought he was seeing a vision. [10]They passed by the first guard station, and then the second, and came at last to the iron gate that opens into the city. The gate opened for them by itself, and they went out. They walked down a street, and suddenly the angel left Peter.

[11]Then Peter realized what had happened to him, and said, "Now I know that it is really true! The Lord sent his angel, and he rescued me from Herod's power and from all the things the Jewish people expected to do."

[12]Aware of his situation, he went to the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark. Many people had gathered there and were praying. [13]Peter knocked at the outside door, and a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer it. [14]She recognized Peter's voice and was so happy that she ran back in without opening the door, and announced that Peter was standing outside. [15]"You are crazy!" they told her. But she insisted that it was true. So they answered, "It is his angel."

16 Meanwhile, Peter kept on knocking. They opened
the door at last and when they saw him they were
amazed. 17 He motioned with his hand for them to be
quiet, and explained to them how the Lord had
brought him out of prison. "Tell this to James and the
rest of the brothers," he said; then he left and went
somewhere else.
18 When morning came, there was a tremendous con-
fusion among the guards; what had happened to Peter?
19 Herod gave orders to search for him, but they could
not find him. So he had the guards questioned and
ordered them to be put to death.
After this Herod went down from Judea and spent
some time in Caesarea.

The Death of Herod

20 Herod was very angry with the people of Tyre and
Sidon; so they went in a group to see Herod. First they
won Blastus over to their side; he was in charge of the
palace. Then they went to Herod and asked him for
peace, because their country got its food supplies from
the king's country.
21 On a chosen day Herod put on his royal robes, sat
on his throne, and made a speech to the people. 22 "It
isn't a man speaking, but a god!" they shouted. 23 At
once the angel of the Lord struck Herod down, because
he did not give honor to God. He was eaten by worms
and died.
24 The word of God continued to spread and grow.
25 Barnabas and Saul finished their mission and re-
turned from Jerusalem, taking John Mark with them.

Barnabas and Saul Chosen and Sent

13 In the church at Antioch there were some proph-
ets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon (called the
Black), Lucius (from Cyrene), Manaen (who had been
brought up with Governor Herod), and Saul. 2 While
they were serving the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit
said to them, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul, to do
the work to which I have called them."
3 They fasted and prayed, placed their hands on them,
and sent them off.

In Cyprus

4 Barnabas and Saul, then, having been sent by the
Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there
to the island of Cyprus. 5 When they arrived at Salamis,
they preached the word of God in the Jewish syna-
gogues. They had John Mark with them to help in the
work.

6 They went all the way across the island to Paphos,
where they met a certain magician named Bar-Jesus, a
Jew who claimed to be a prophet. 7 He was a friend of
the Governor of the island, Sergius Paulus, who was an
intelligent man. The Governor called Barnabas and
Saul before him because he wanted to hear the word of
God. 8 But they were opposed by the magician Elymas
(this is his name in Greek); he tried to turn the Gover-
nor away from the faith. 9 Then Saul—also known as
Paul—was filled with the Holy Spirit; he looked
straight at the magician 10 and said, "You son of the
Devil! You are the enemy of everything that is good;
you are full of all kinds of evil tricks, and you always
keep trying to turn the Lord's truths into lies! 11 The
Lord's hand will come down on you now; you will be
blind, and will not see the light of day for a time."

At once Elymas felt a black mist cover his eyes, and
he walked around trying to find someone to lead him
by the hand. 12 The Governor believed when he saw
what had happened; he was greatly amazed at the
teaching about the Lord.

In Antioch of Pisidia

13 Paul and his companions sailed from Paphos and
came to Perga, in Pamphylia; but John Mark left them
there and went back to Jerusalem. 14 They went on from
Perga and came to Antioch of Pisidia; and on the Sab-
bath day they went into the synagogue and sat down.
15 After the reading from the Law of Moses and the
writings of the prophets, the officials of the synagogue
sent them a message: "Brothers, we want you to speak
to the people if you have a message of encouragement
for them." 16 Paul stood up, motioned with his hand, and
began to speak:

"Fellow Israelites and all Gentiles here who worship

God: hear me! [17]The God of this people of Israel chose
our ancestors, and made the people a great nation dur-
ing the time they lived as foreigners in the land of Egypt.
God brought them out of Egypt by his great power,
[18]and for forty years he endured them in the desert. [19]He
destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan and made
his people the owners of the land [20]for about four hun-
dred and fifty years.

"After this he gave them judges, until the time of
the prophet Samuel. [21]And when they asked for a king,
God gave them Saul, the son of Kish, from the tribe of
Benjamin, to be their king for forty years. [22]After
removing him, God made David their king. This is
what God said about him, 'I have found that David,
the son of Jesse, is the kind of man I like, a man who
will do all I want him to do.' [23]It was Jesus, a descend-
ant of David, that God made the Savior of the people
of Israel, as he had promised. [24]Before Jesus began his
work, John preached to all the people of Israel that
they should turn from their sins and be baptized.
[25]And as John was about to finish his mission, he said
to the people, 'Who do you think I am? I am not the
one you are waiting for. But look! He is coming after
me, and I am not good enough to take his sandals off
his feet.'

[26]"My brothers, descendants of Abraham, and all
Gentiles here who worship God: it is to us that this
message of salvation has been sent! [27]For the people
who live in Jerusalem, and their leaders, did not know
that he is the Savior, nor did they understand the
words of the prophets that are read every Sabbath day.
Yet they made the prophets' words come true by con-
demning Jesus. [28]And even though they could find no
reason to pass the death sentence on him, they asked
Pilate to have him put to death. [29]And after they had
done everything that the Scriptures say about him,
they took him down from the cross and placed him in
a grave. [30]But God raised him from the dead, [31]and for
many days he appeared to those who had traveled with
him from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now wit-
nesses for him to the people of Israel. [32-33]And we are
here to bring the Good News to you: what God prom-
ised our ancestors he would do, he has now done for

us, who are their descendants, by raising Jesus to life.
As it is written in the second Psalm,
'You are my Son;
today I have become your Father.'
[34]And this is what God said about raising him from the
dead, never again to return to decay,
'I will give you the sacred and sure blessings
that I promised to David.'
[35]As indeed he says in another passage,
'You will not allow your devoted servant
to suffer decay.'
[36]For David served God's purposes in his own time;
and then he died, was buried beside his ancestors, and
suffered decay. [37]But the one whom God raised from
the dead did not suffer decay. [38-39]All of you, my
brothers, are to know for sure that it is through Jesus
that the message about forgiveness of sins is preached
to you; you are to know that everyone who believes in
him is set free from all the sins from which the Law of
Moses could not set you free. [40]Take care, then, so
that what the prophets said may not happen to you,
[41]'Look, you scoffers! Wonder and die!
For the work that I am doing in your
own day
is something that you will not believe,
even when someone explains it to
you!' "

[42]As Paul and Barnabas were leaving the synagogue,
the people invited them to come back the next Sabbath
and tell them more about these things. [43]After the peo-
ple had left the meeting, Paul and Barnabas were fol-
lowed by many Jews and many Gentiles converted to
Judaism. The apostles spoke to them and encouraged
them to keep on living in the grace of God.

[44]The next Sabbath day nearly everyone in the town
came to hear the word of the Lord. [45]When the Jews
saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy; they
spoke against what Paul was saying and insulted him.
[46]But Paul and Barnabas spoke out even more boldly,
"It was necessary that the word of God should be
spoken first to you. But since you reject it, and do not
consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we will

leave you and go to the Gentiles. [47]For this is the commandment that the Lord has given us,

'I have set you to be a light for the
Gentiles,
to be the way of salvation for the
whole world.' "

[48]When the Gentiles heard this they were glad and praised the Lord's message; and those who had been chosen for eternal life became believers.

Shook the dust off their feet aginst them

[49]The word of the Lord spread everywhere in that region. [50]But the Jews stirred up the leading men of the city and the Gentile women of high social standing who worshiped God. They started a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and threw them out of their region. [51]The apostles shook the dust off their feet against them and went on to Iconium. [52]The disciples in Antioch were full of joy and the Holy Spirit.

In Iconium

14 The same thing happened in Iconium: Paul and Barnabas went to the Jewish synagogue and

spoke in such a way that a great number of Jews and Gentiles became believers. 2But the Jews who would not believe stirred up the Gentiles and turned their feelings against the brothers. 3The apostles stayed there for a long time. They spoke boldly about the Lord, who proved that their message about his grace was true by giving them the power to perform miracles and wonders. 4The crowd in the city was divided: some were for the Jews, others for the apostles.

5Then the Gentiles and the Jews, together with their leaders, decided to mistreat the apostles and stone them. 6When the apostles learned about it they fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities in Lycaonia, and to the surrounding territory. 7There they preached the Good News.

In Lystra and Derbe

8There was a man living in Lystra whose feet were crippled; he had been lame from birth and had never been able to walk. 9Sitting there, he listened to Paul's words. Paul saw that he believed and could be healed, so he looked straight at him 10and said in a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!" The man jumped up and started walking around. 11When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they started to shout in their own Lycaonian language, "The gods have become like men and have come down to us!" 12They gave Barnabas the name Zeus, and Paul the name Hermes, because he was the one who did the speaking. 13The priest of the god Zeus, whose temple stood just outside the town, brought bulls and flowers to the gate. He and the crowds wanted to offer sacrifice to the apostles.

14When Barnabas and Paul heard what they were about to do, they tore their clothes and ran into the middle of the crowd, shouting, 15"Why are you doing this, men? We are just men, human beings like you! We are here to announce the Good News, to turn you away from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven, earth, sea, and all that is in them. 16In the past he allowed all peoples to go their own way. 17But he has always given proof of himself by the good things he does: he gives you rain from heaven and crops at the right times; he gives you food and fills your hearts with

And dragged him out of town

happiness." [18]Even with these words the apostles could hardly keep the crowds from offering a sacrifice to them.

[19]Some Jews came from Antioch of Pisidia and from Iconium; they won the crowds to their side, stoned Paul and dragged him out of town, thinking that he was dead. [20]But when the believers gathered around him, he got up and went back into the town. The next day he and Barnabas went to Derbe.

The Return to Antioch in Syria

[21]Paul and Barnabas preached the Good News in Derbe, and won many disciples. Then they went back to Lystra, then to Iconium, and then to Antioch of Pisidia. [22]They strengthened the believers and encouraged them to remain true to the faith. "We must pass through many troubles to enter the Kingdom of God," they taught. [23]In each church they appointed elders for them; and with prayers and fasting they commended them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

[24]After going through the territory of Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. [25]They preached the message in Perga and then went down to Attalia, [26]and from there they sailed back to Antioch, the place where they had been commended to the care of God's grace for the work they had now completed.

27When they arrived in Antioch they gathered the
people of the church together and told them of all that
God had done with them, and how he had opened the
way for the Gentiles to believe. 28They stayed a long
time there with the believers.

The Meeting at Jerusalem

15 Some men came from Judea to Antioch and started teaching the brothers, "You cannot be saved unless you are circumcised as the Law of Moses requires." 2Paul and Barnabas had a fierce argument and dispute with them about this; so it was decided that Paul and Barnabas and some of the others in Antioch should go to Jerusalem and see the apostles and elders about this matter.

3They were sent on their way by the church, and as they went through Phoenicia and Samaria they reported how the Gentiles had turned to God; this news brought great joy to all the brothers. 4When they arrived in Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church, the apostles, and the elders, to whom they told all that God had done with them. 5But some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "They have to be circumcised and told to obey the Law of Moses."

6The apostles and the elders met together to consider this question. 7After a long debate Peter stood up and said, "My brothers, you know that a long time ago God chose me from among you to preach the message of Good News to the Gentiles, so that they could hear and believe. 8And God, who knows the hearts of men, showed his approval of the Gentiles by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he had to us. 9He made no difference between us and them; he purified their hearts because they believed. 10So then, why do you want to put God to the test now by laying a load on the backs of the believers which neither our ancestors nor we ourselves were able to carry? 11No! We believe and are saved by the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they are."

12The whole group was silent as they heard Barnabas and Paul report all the wonders and miracles that God had done through them among the Gentiles. 13When

they finished speaking, James spoke up, "Listen to me, brothers! [14]Simon has just explained how God first showed his care for the Gentiles by taking from among them a people to be all his own. [15]The words of the prophets agree completely with this. As the scripture says,

[16] 'After this I will return, says the Lord,
and I will raise David's fallen house.
I will restore its ruins,
and build it up again.
[17] And so all other people will seek the Lord,
all the Gentiles whom I have called to
be my own.
[18] So says the Lord, who made this known
long ago.'

[19]"It is my opinion," James went on, "that we should not trouble the Gentiles who are turning to God. [20]Instead, we should write a letter telling them not to eat any food that is unclean because it has been offered to idols; to keep themselves from immorality; not to eat any animal that has been strangled, or any blood. [21]For the Law of Moses has been read for a very long time in the synagogues every Sabbath, and his words are preached in every town."

The Letter to the Gentile Believers

[22]Then the apostles and the elders, together with the whole church, decided to choose some men from the group and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas, called Barsabbas, and Silas, two men who were highly respected by the brothers. [23]They sent the following letter by them:

"We, the apostles and the elders, your brothers, send greetings to all brothers of Gentile birth who live in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. [24]We have heard that some men of our group went out and troubled and upset you by what they said; they had not, however, received any instructions from us to do this. [25]And so we have met together and have all agreed to choose some messengers and send them to you. They will go with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul, [26]who have risked their lives in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ. [27]We send you, then,

Judas and Silas, who will tell you in person the same things we are writing. [28]The Holy Spirit and we have agreed not to put any other burden on you besides these necessary rules: [29]eat no food that has been offered to idols; eat no blood; eat no animal that has been strangled; and keep yourselves from immorality. You will do well if you keep yourselves from doing these things. Good-bye."

[30]The messengers were sent off and went to Antioch, where they gathered the whole group of believers and gave them the letter. [31]When the people read the letter, they were filled with joy by the message of encouragement. [32]Judas and Silas, who were themselves prophets, spoke a long time with the brothers, giving them courage and strength. [33]After spending some time there, they were sent off in peace by the brothers, and went back to those who had sent them. [[34]But Silas decided to stay there.]

[35]Paul and Barnabas spent some time in Antioch. Together with many others, they taught and preached the word of the Lord.

Paul and Barnabas Separate

[36]Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back and visit our brothers in every city where we preached the word of the Lord, and find out how they are getting along." [37]Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them, [38]but Paul did not think it was right to take him, because he had not stayed with them to the end of their mission, but had turned back and left them in Pamphylia. [39]They had a sharp argument between them, and separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark and sailed off for Cyprus, [40]while Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the brothers to the care of the Lord's grace. [41]He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

Timothy Goes with Paul and Silas

16 Paul traveled on to Derbe and Lystra. A believer named Timothy lived there; his mother, also a

believer, was Jewish, but his father was Greek. [2]All the brothers in Lystra and Iconium spoke well of Timothy. [3]Paul wanted to take Timothy along with him, so he circumcised him. He did so because all the Jews who lived in those places knew that Timothy's father was Greek. [4]As they went through the towns they delivered to the believers the rules decided upon by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem, and told them to obey these rules. [5]So the churches were made stronger in the faith and grew in numbers every day.

In Troas: Paul's Vision

[6]They traveled through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, because the Holy Spirit did not let them preach the message in the province of Asia. [7]When they reached the border of Mysia, they tried to go into the province of Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. [8]So they traveled right on through Mysia and went down to Troas. [9]Paul had a vision that night in which he saw a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!" [10]As soon as Paul had this vision, we got ready to leave for Macedonia, because we decided that God had called us to preach the Good News to the people there.

In Philippi: the Conversion of Lydia

[11]We left by ship from Troas and sailed straight across to Samothrace, and the next day to Neapolis. [12]From there we went inland to Philippi, a city of the first district of Macedonia; it is also a Roman colony. We spent several days in that city. [13]On the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where we thought there would be a Jewish place for prayer. We sat down and talked to the women who gathered there. [14]One of those who heard us was Lydia, from Thyatira, who was a dealer in purple goods. She was a woman who worshiped God, and the Lord opened her mind to pay attention to what Paul was saying. [15]She and the people of her house were baptized. Then she invited us, "Come and stay in my house, if you have decided that I am a true believer in the Lord." And she persuaded us to go.

In Prison at Philippi

16 One day as we were going to the place of prayer, we
were met by a slave girl who had an evil spirit in her that
made her predict the future. She earned much money
for her owners by telling fortunes. 17 She followed Paul
and us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most
High God! They announce to you how you can be
saved!" 18 She did this for many days, until Paul became
so upset that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In
the name of Jesus Christ I order you to come out of
her!" The spirit went out of her that very moment.
19 When her owners realized that their chance of making
money was gone, they grabbed Paul and Silas and
dragged them to the authorities in the public square.
20 They brought them before the Roman officials and
said, "These men are Jews, and they are causing trouble
in our city. 21 They are teaching customs that are against
our law; we are Romans and cannot accept or practice
them." 22 The crowd joined the attack against them; the
officials tore the clothes off Paul and Silas, and ordered
them to be whipped. 23 After a severe beating they were
thrown into jail, and the jailer was ordered to lock them
up tight. 24 Upon receiving this order, the jailer threw
them into the inner cell and fastened their feet between
heavy blocks of wood.

25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and
singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were
listening to them. 26 Suddenly there was a violent
earthquake, which shook the prison to its foundations.
At once all the doors opened, and the chains fell off all
the prisoners. 27 The jailer woke up, and when he saw
the prison doors open he thought that all the prisoners
had escaped; so he pulled out his sword and was about
to kill himself. 28 But Paul shouted at the top of his
voice, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"

29 The jailer called for a light, rushed in, and fell
trembling at the feet of Paul and Silas. 30 Then he led
them out and asked, "What must I do, sirs, to be
saved?"

31 "Believe in the Lord Jesus," they said, "and you
will be saved—you and your family." 32 Then they
preached the word of the Lord to him and to all the

What must I do, sirs, to be saved?

others in his house. [33]At that very hour of the night the jailer took them and washed off their wounds; and he and all his family were baptized at once. [34]He took Paul and Silas up into his house and gave them some food to eat. He and his family were filled with joy, because he now believed in God.

[35]The next morning the Roman authorities sent police officers with the order, "Let those men go."

[36]So the jailer told it to Paul, "The officials have sent an order for you and Silas to be released. You may leave, then, and go in peace."

[37]But Paul said to the police officers, "We were not found guilty of any crime, yet they whipped us in public—and we are Roman citizens! Then they threw us in prison. And now they want to send us away secretly? Not at all! The Roman officials themselves must come here and let us out."

[38]The police officers reported these words to the Roman officials; and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were afraid. [39]So they went and apologized to them; then they led them out of the

prison and asked them to leave the city. [40]Paul and Silas left the prison and went to Lydia's house. There they met the brothers, spoke words of encouragement to them, and left.

In Thessalonica

17 They traveled on through Amphipolis and Apollonia, and came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. [2]According to his usual habit, Paul went to the synagogue. There during three Sabbath days he argued with the people from the Scriptures, [3]explaining them and proving from them that the Messiah had to suffer, and rise from death. "This Jesus whom I announce to you," Paul said, "is the Messiah." [4]Some of them were convinced and joined Paul and Silas; so did a large group of Greeks who worshiped God, and many of the leading women.

[5]But the Jews were jealous and gathered some of the worthless loafers from the streets and formed a mob. They set the whole city in an uproar, and attacked the home of Jason, trying to find Paul and Silas and bring them out to the people. [6]But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other brothers to the city authorities and shouted, "These men have caused trouble everywhere! Now they have come to our city, [7]and Jason has kept them in his house. They are all breaking the laws of the Emperor, saying that there is another king, by the name of Jesus." [8]With these words they threw the crowd and the city authorities in an uproar. [9]The authorities made Jason and the others pay the required amount of money to be released, and then let them go.

In Berea

[10]As soon as night came, the brothers sent Paul and Silas to Berea. When they arrived, they went to the Jewish synagogue. [11]The people there were more open-minded than the people in Thessalonica. They listened to the message with great eagerness, and every day they studied the Scriptures to see if what Paul said was really true. [12]Many of them believed; and many Greek women of high social standing and many Greek men also be-

lieved. 13But when the Jews in Thessalonica heard that Paul had preached the word of God in Berea also, they came there and started exciting and stirring up the mobs. 14At once the brothers sent Paul away to the coast; but both Silas and Timothy stayed in Berea. 15The men who were taking Paul went with him as far as Athens. Then they went back to Berea with instructions from Paul that Silas and Timothy join him as soon as possible.

In Athens

16While Paul was waiting in Athens for Silas and Timothy, he was greatly upset when he noticed how full of idols the city was. 17So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and the Gentiles who worshiped God, and in the public square every day with the people who happened to come by. 18Certain Epicurean and Stoic teachers also debated with him. Some said, "What is this ignorant show-off trying to say?"

Others said, "He seems to be talking about foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching about Jesus and the resurrection. 19So they took Paul, brought him before the meeting of the Areopagus, and said, "We would like to know this new teaching that you are talking about. 20Some of the things we hear you say sound strange to us, and we would like to know what they mean." 21(For all the citizens of Athens and the foreigners who lived there liked to spend all their time telling and hearing the latest new thing.)

22Paul stood up in front of the meeting of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. 23For as I walked through your city and looked at the places where you worship, I found also an altar on which is written, 'To an Unknown God.' That which you worship, then, even though you do not know it, is what I now proclaim to you. 24God, who made the world and everything in it, is Lord of heaven and earth, and does not live in temples made by men. 25Nor does he need anything that men can supply by working for him, since it is he himself who gives life and breath and everything else to all men. 26From the one man he created all races of men, and made them live

over the whole earth. He himself fixed beforehand the exact times and the limits of the places where they would live. [27]He did this so that they would look for him, and perhaps find him as they felt around for him. Yet God is actually not far from any one of us; [28]as someone has said,

'In him we live and move and exist.'

It is as some of your poets have said,

'We too are his children.'

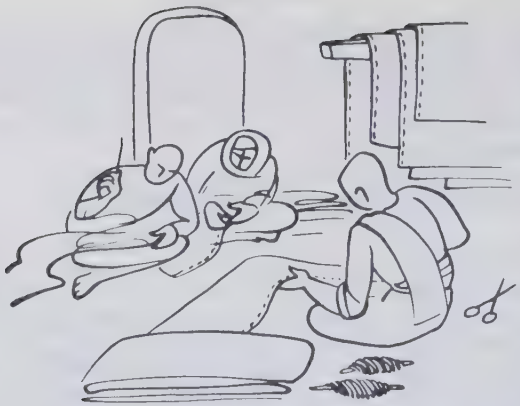
[29]Since we are God's children, we should not suppose that his nature is anything like an image of gold or silver or stone, shaped by the art and skill of man. [30]God has overlooked the times when men did not know, but now he commands all men everywhere to turn away from their evil ways. [31]For he has fixed a day in which he will judge the whole world with justice, by means of a man he has chosen. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising that man from death!"

[32]When they heard Paul speak about a raising from death, some of them made fun of him, but others said, "We want to hear you speak about this again." [33]And so Paul left the meeting. [34]Some men joined him and believed; among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, a woman named Damaris, and some others.

In Corinth

18 After this, Paul left Athens and went on to Corinth. [2]There he met a Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had just come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Emperor Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, [3]and stayed and worked with them, because he earned his living by making tents, just as they did. [4]He argued in the synagogue every Sabbath, trying to convince both Jews and Greeks.

[5]When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul gave his whole time to preaching the message, testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah. [6]When they opposed him and said evil things about him, he protested by shaking the dust from his clothes and saying to them, "If you are lost, you yourselves must take the blame for it! I am not responsible. From now on I



He earned his living by making tents

will go to the Gentiles." [7]So he left them and went to live in the house of a Gentile named Titius Justus, who worshiped God; his house was next to the synagogue. [8]Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, he and all his family; and many other people in Corinth heard the message, believed, and were baptized.

[9]One night Paul had a vision, in which the Lord said to him, "Do not be afraid, but keep on speaking and do not give up, [10]because I am with you. No one will be able to harm you, because many in this city are my people." [11]So Paul stayed there for a year and a half, teaching the people the word of God.

[12]When Gallio was made the Roman governor of Greece, the Jews got together, seized Paul and took him into court. [13]"This man," they said, "is trying to persuade people to worship God in a way that is against the law!"

[14]Paul was about to speak, when Gallio said to the Jews, "If this were a matter of some wrong or evil crime that has been committed, it would be reasonable for me to be patient with you Jews. [15]But since it is an argument about words and names and your own law, you yourselves must settle it. I will not be the judge of such things!" [16]And he drove them out of the court.

17 They all grabbed Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the court. But that did not bother Gallio a bit.

The Return to Antioch

18 Paul stayed on in Corinth with the brothers for many days, then left them and sailed off with Priscilla and Aquila for Syria. Before sailing he made a vow in Cenchreae and had his head shaved. 19 They arrived in Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila. He went into the synagogue and argued with the Jews. 20 They asked him to stay with them a long time, but he would not consent. 21 Instead, he told them as he left, "If it is the will of God, I will come back to you." And so he sailed from Ephesus.

22 When he arrived at Caesarea he went to Jerusalem and greeted the church, and then went to Antioch. 23 After spending some time there he left. He went through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the believers.

Apollos in Ephesus and Corinth

24 A certain Jew named Apollos, born in Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent speaker and had a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. 25 He had been instructed in the Way of the Lord, and with great enthusiasm spoke and taught correctly the facts about Jesus. However, he knew only the baptism of John. 26 He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him home with them and explained to him more correctly the Way of God. 27 Apollos decided to go to Greece, so the believers in Ephesus helped him by writing to their brothers in Greece, urging them to welcome him there. When he arrived, he was a great help to those who through God's grace had become believers. 28 For with his strong arguments he defeated the Jews in public debates, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah.

Paul in Ephesus

19 While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior of the province and arrived

in Ephesus. There he found some disciples, [2]and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"

"We have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit," they answered.

[3]"Well, then, what kind of baptism did you receive?" Paul asked.

"The baptism of John," they answered.

[4]Paul said, "The baptism of John was for those who turned from their sins; and he told the people of Israel to believe in the one who was coming after him—that is, in Jesus."

[5]When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. [6]Paul placed his hands on them, and the Holy Spirit came upon them; they spoke in strange tongues and also proclaimed God's message. [7]They were about twelve men in all.

[8]Paul went into the synagogue, and for three months spoke boldly with the people, arguing with them and trying to convince them about the Kingdom of God. [9]But some of them were stubborn and would not believe, and said evil things about the Way of the Lord before the whole group. So Paul left them and took the disciples with him; and every day he held discussions in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. [10]This went on for two years, so that all the people who lived in the province of Asia, both Jews and Gentiles, heard the word of the Lord.

The Sons of Sceva

[11]God was performing unusual miracles through Paul. [12]Even handkerchiefs and aprons he had used were taken to the sick, and their diseases were driven away and the evil spirits would go out of them. [13]Some Jews who traveled around and drove out evil spirits also tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus to do this. They said to the evil spirits, "I command you in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches." [14]There were seven sons of a Jewish High Priest named Sceva who were doing this.

[15]But the evil spirit said to them, "I know Jesus and I know about Paul; but you—who are you?"

[16]The man who had the evil spirit in him attacked them with such violence that he defeated them. They all

ran away from his house, wounded and with their clothes torn off. [17]All the Jews and Gentiles who lived in Ephesus heard about this; they were all filled with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was given greater honor. [18]Many of the believers came, publicly admitting and revealing what they had done. [19]Many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the presence of everyone. They added up the price of the books and the total came to fifty thousand dollars. [20]In this powerful way the word of the Lord kept spreading and growing stronger.

The Riot in Ephesus

[21]After these things had happened, Paul made up his mind to travel through Macedonia and Greece and go on to Jerusalem. "After I go there," he said, "I must also see Rome." [22]So he sent Timothy and Erastus, two of his helpers, to Macedonia, while he spent more time in the province of Asia.

[23]It was at this time that there was serious trouble in Ephesus because of the Way of the Lord. [24]A certain silversmith named Demetrius made silver models of the temple of the goddess Artemis, and his business brought a great deal of profit to the workers. [25]So he called them all together, with others whose work was like theirs, and said to them, "Men, you know that our prosperity comes from this work. [26]You can see and hear for yourselves what this fellow Paul is doing. He says that gods made by men are not gods at all, and has succeeded in convincing many people, both here in Ephesus and in nearly the whole province of Asia. [27]There is the danger, then, that this business of ours will get a bad name. Not only that, there is also the danger that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will come to mean nothing, and that her greatness will be destroyed—the goddess worshiped by everyone in Asia and in all the world!"

[28]As the crowd heard these words they became furious, and started shouting, "Great is Artemis of Ephesus!" [29]The uproar spread throughout the whole city. The mob grabbed Gaius and Aristarchus, two Macedonians who were traveling with Paul, and rushed with them to the theater. [30]Paul himself wanted to go before the crowd, but the believers would not let him.

[31]Some of the provincial authorities, who were his friends, also sent him a message begging him not to show himself in the theater. [32]Meanwhile, the whole meeting was in an uproar: some people were shouting one thing, others were shouting something else, because most of them did not even know why they had come together. [33]Some of the people concluded that Alexander was responsible, since the Jews made him go up to the front. Then Alexander motioned with his hand and tried to make a speech of defense before the people. [34]But when they recognized that he was a Jew, they all shouted together the same thing for two hours, "Great is Artemis of Ephesus!"

[35]At last the city clerk was able to calm the crowd. "Men of Ephesus!" he said. "Everyone knows that the city of Ephesus is the keeper of the temple of the great Artemis and of the sacred stone that fell down from heaven. [36]Nobody can deny these things. So then, you must calm down and not do anything reckless. [37]You have brought these men here, even though they have not robbed temples or said evil things about our goddess. [38]If Demetrius and his workers have an accusation against someone, there are the regular days for court and there are the authorities; they can accuse each other there. [39]But if there is something more that you want, it will have to be settled in the legal meeting of citizens. [40]For there is the danger that we will be accused of a riot in what has happened today. There is no excuse for all this uproar, and we would not be able to give a good reason for it." [41]After saying this, he dismissed the meeting.

To Macedonia and Greece

20 After the uproar died down, Paul called together the believers, and with words of encouragement said good-bye to them. Then he left and went on to Macedonia. [2]He went through those regions and encouraged the people with many messages. Then he came to Greece, [3]where he stayed three months. He was getting ready to go to Syria when he discovered that the Jews were plotting against him; so he decided to go back through Macedonia. [4]Sopater, the son of Pyrrhus, from

Berea, went with him; so did Aristarchus and Secundus, from Thessalonica; Gaius, from Derbe; Timothy; and Tychicus and Trophimus, from the province of Asia. [5]They went ahead and waited for us in Troas. [6]We sailed from Philippi after the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and five days later joined them in Troas, where we spent a week.

Eutychus got sleepier and sleepier

Paul's Last Visit in Troas

[7]On Saturday evening we gathered together for the fellowship meal. Paul spoke to the people, and kept on speaking until midnight, since he was going to leave the next day. [8]There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting. [9]A young man named Eutychus was sitting in the window; and as Paul kept on talking, Eutychus got sleepier and sleepier, until he finally went sound asleep and fell from the third story to the ground. They picked him up, and he was dead.

[10]But Paul went down and threw himself on him and hugged him. "Don't worry," he said, "he is still alive!" [11]Then he went back upstairs, broke bread, and ate. After talking with them for a long time until sunrise, Paul left. [12]They took the young man home alive, and were greatly comforted.

From Troas to Miletus

[13]We went on ahead to the ship and sailed off to Assos, where we were going to take Paul aboard. He had told us to do this, because he was going there by land. [14]When he met us in Assos, we took him aboard and went on to Mitylene. [15]We sailed from there and arrived off Chios the next day. A day later we came to Samos, and the following day we reached Miletus. [16]Paul had decided to sail on by Ephesus, so as not to lose any time in the province of Asia. He was in a hurry to arrive in Jerusalem, if at all possible, by the day of Pentecost.

Paul's Farewell Speech to the Elders of Ephesus

[17]Paul sent a message from Miletus to Ephesus, asking the elders of the church to meet him. [18]When they arrived, he said to them, "You know how I spent the whole time I was with you, from the first day I arrived in the province of Asia. [19]With all humility and many tears I did my work as the Lord's servant, through the hard times that came to me because of the plots of the Jews. [20]You know that I did not hold back anything that would be of help to you as I preached and taught you in public and in your homes. [21]To Jews and Gentiles alike I gave solemn warning that they should turn from their sins to God, and believe in our Lord Jesus. [22]And now, in obedience to the Holy Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. [23]I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit has warned me that prison and troubles wait for me. [24]But I reckon my own life to be worth nothing to me, in order that I may complete my mission and finish the work that the Lord Jesus gave me to do, which is to declare the Good News of the grace of God.

[25]"I have gone about among all of you, preaching the Kingdom of God. And now I know that none of you will

ever see me again. [26]So I solemnly declare to you this very day: if any of you should be lost, I am not responsible. [27]For I have not held back from announcing to you the whole purpose of God. [28]Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock which the Holy Spirit has placed in your care. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he made his own through the death of his own Son. [29]I know that after I leave, fierce wolves will come among you, and they will not spare the flock. [30]The time will come when some men from your own group will tell lies to lead the believers away after them. [31]Watch, then, and remember that with many tears, day and night, I taught every one of you for three years.

[32]"And now I place you in the care of God and the message of his grace. He is able to build you up and give you the blessings he keeps for all his people. [33]I have not coveted anyone's silver or gold or clothing. [34]You yourselves know that with these hands of mine I have worked and provided everything that my companions and I have needed. [35]I have shown you in all things that by working hard in this way we must help the weak, remembering the words that the Lord Jesus himself said, 'There is more happiness in giving than in receiving.' "

[36]When Paul finished, he knelt down with them all and prayed. [37]They were all crying as they hugged him and kissed him good-bye. [38]They were especially sad at the words he had said that they would never see him again. And so they went with him to the ship.

Paul Goes to Jerusalem

21 We said good-bye to them and left. After sailing straight across, we came to Cos; the next day we reached Rhodes, and from there we went on to Patara. [2]There we found a ship that was going to Phoenicia; so we went aboard and sailed away. [3]We came to where we could see Cyprus, and sailed south of it on to Syria. We went ashore at Tyre, where the ship was going to unload its cargo. [4]We found some believers there, and stayed with them a week. By the power of the Spirit they told Paul not to go to Jerusalem. [5]But when our time with them was over, we left and went on our way. All of

Knelt down on the beach and prayed

them, with their wives and children, went with us out of the city. We all knelt down on the beach and prayed. [6]Then we said good-bye to one another, and we went on board the ship while they went back home.

[7]We continued our voyage, sailing from Tyre to Ptolemais, where we greeted the brothers and stayed with them for a day. [8]On the following day we left and arrived in Caesarea. There we went to the house of the evangelist Philip, and stayed with him. He was one of the seven men who had been chosen in Jerusalem. [9]He had four unmarried daughters who proclaimed God's message. [10]We had been there for several days when a prophet named Agabus arrived from Judea. [11]He came to us, took Paul's belt, tied up his own feet and hands with it, and said, "This is what the Holy Spirit says: The owner of this belt will be tied up in this way by the Jews in Jerusalem, and they will hand him over to the Gentiles."

[12]When we heard this, we and the others there begged Paul not to go to Jerusalem. [13]But he answered, "What are you doing, crying like this and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be tied up in Jerusalem but even to die there for the sake of the Lord Jesus."

[14]We could not convince him, so we gave up and said, "May the Lord's will be done."

[15]After spending some time there, we got our things ready and left for Jerusalem. [16]Some of the disciples from Caesarea also went with us, and took us to the house of the man we were going to stay with Mna-

son, from Cyprus, who had been a believer since the early days.

Paul Visits James

17 When we arrived in Jerusalem the brothers welcomed us warmly. 18 The next day Paul went with us to see James; and all the church elders were present. 19 Paul greeted them and gave a complete report of everything that God had done among the Gentiles through his work. 20 After hearing him, they all praised God. Then they said to Paul, "You can see how it is, brother. There are thousands of Jews who have become believers, and they are all very devoted to the Law. 21 They have been told about you that you have been teaching all the Jews who live in Gentile countries to abandon the Law of Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or follow the Jewish customs. 22 They are sure to hear that you have arrived. What should be done, then? 23 Do what we tell you. There are four men here who have taken a vow. 24 Go along with them and join them in the ceremony of purification and pay their expenses; then they will be able to shave their heads. In this way everyone will know that there is no truth in any of the things that they have been told about you, but that you yourself live in accordance with the Law of Moses. 25 But as to the Gentiles who have become believers, we have sent them a letter telling them we decided that they must not eat any food that has been offered to idols, or any blood, or any animal that has been strangled, and that they must keep themselves from immorality."

26 So Paul took the men and the next day performed the ceremony of purification with them. Then he went into the temple and gave notice of how many days it would be until the end of the period of purification, when the sacrifice for each one of them would be offered.

Paul Arrested in the Temple

27 When the seven days were about to come to an end, some Jews from the province of Asia saw Paul in the temple. They stirred up the whole crowd and grabbed

Paul. [28]"Men of Israel!" they shouted. "Help! This is the man who goes everywhere teaching everyone against the people of Israel, the Law of Moses, and this temple. And now he has even brought some Gentiles into the temple and defiled this holy place!" [29](They said this because they had seen Trophimus from Ephesus with Paul in the city, and they thought that Paul had taken him into the temple.)

The mob was trying to kill Paul

[30]Confusion spread through the whole city, and the people all ran together, grabbed Paul, and dragged him out of the temple. At once the temple doors were closed. [31]The mob was trying to kill Paul when a report was sent up to the commander of the Roman troops that all of Jerusalem was rioting. [32]At once the commander took some officers and soldiers and rushed down to the crowd. When the people saw him with the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. [33]The commander went over to Paul, arrested him, and ordered him to be tied up with two chains. Then he asked, "Who is this man, and what has he done?" [34]Some in the crowd shouted one thing, others something else. There was such confusion that the commander could not find out exactly what had happened; so he ordered his men to take Paul up into the fort. [35]They got with him to the steps, and then the soldiers had to carry him because the mob was so wild. [36]They were all coming after him and screaming, "Kill him!"

Paul Defends Himself

37As they were about to take Paul into the fort, he
spoke to the commander, "May I say something to
you?"

"Do you speak Greek?" the commander asked.
38"Then you are not that Egyptian fellow who some
time ago started a revolution and led four thousand
armed terrorists out into the desert?"

39Paul answered, "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of
Cilicia, a citizen of an important city. Please, let me
speak to the people."

40The commander gave him permission, so Paul
stood on the steps and motioned with his hand to the
people. When they were quiet, Paul spoke to them in
Hebrew,

22 "Men, brothers and fathers, listen to me as I
make my defense before you!" 2When they heard
him speaking to them in Hebrew, they were even qui-
eter; and Paul went on,

3"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up
here in Jerusalem as a student of Gamaliel. I received
strict instruction in the Law of our ancestors, and was
just as dedicated to God as all of you here today are. 4I
persecuted to the death the people who followed this
Way. I arrested men and women and threw them into
prison. 5The High Priest and the whole Council can
prove that I am telling the truth. I received from them
letters written to the Jewish brothers in Damascus, so I
went there to arrest these people and bring them back
in chains to Jerusalem to be punished."

Paul Tells of His Conversion

(Also Acts 9.1–19; 26.12–18)

6"As I was traveling and coming near Damascus,
about midday a bright light from the sky flashed sud-
denly around me. 7I fell to the ground and heard a voice
saying to me, 'Saul, Saul! Why do you persecute me?'
8'Who are you, Lord?' I asked. 'I am Jesus of Nazareth,
whom you persecute,' he said to me. 9The men with me
saw the light but did not hear the voice of the one who
was speaking to me. 10I asked, 'What shall I do, Lord?'
and the Lord said to me, 'Get up and go into Damascus,

and there you will be told everything that God has determined for you to do.' [11]I was blind because of the bright light, and so my companions took me by the hand and led me into Damascus.

[12]"There was a man named Ananias, a religious man who obeyed our Law and was highly respected by all the Jews living in Damascus. [13]He came to me, stood by me and said, 'Brother Saul, see again!' At that very moment I saw again and looked at him. [14]He said, 'The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will, to see his righteous Servant, and hear him speaking with his own voice. [15]For you will be a witness for him to tell all men what you have seen and heard. [16]And now, why wait any longer? Get up and be baptized and have your sins washed away by calling on his name.' "

Paul's Call to Preach to the Gentiles

[17]"I went back to Jerusalem, and while I was praying in the temple I had a vision, [18]in which I saw the Lord as he said to me, 'Hurry and leave Jerusalem quickly, because the people here will not accept your witness about me.' [19]'Lord,' I answered, 'they know very well that I went to the synagogues and arrested and beat those who believe in you. [20]And when your witness Stephen was put to death, I myself was there, approving of his murder and taking care of the cloaks of his murderers.' [21]'Go,' the Lord said to me, 'because I will send you far away to the Gentiles.' "

[22]The people listened to Paul until he said this; but then they started shouting at the top of their voices, "Away with him! Kill him! He's not fit to live!" [23]They were screaming, waving their clothes, and throwing dust up in the air. [24]The Roman commander ordered his men to take Paul into the fort, and told them to whip him to find out why the Jews were screaming like this against him. [25]But when they had tied him up to be whipped, Paul said to the officer standing there, "Is it lawful for you to whip a Roman citizen who hasn't even been tried for any crime?"

[26]When the officer heard this, he went to the commander and asked him, "What are you doing? That man is a Roman citizen!"

[27]So the commander went to Paul and asked him, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?"

"Yes," answered Paul.

[28]The commander said, "I became one by paying a large amount of money."

"But I am one by birth," Paul answered.

[29]At once the men who were going to question Paul drew back from him; and the commander was afraid when he realized that Paul was a Roman citizen, and that he had put him in chains.

Paul before the Council

[30]The commander wanted to find out for sure what the Jews were accusing Paul of; so the next day he had Paul's chains taken off and ordered the chief priests and the whole Council to meet. Then he took Paul, and made him stand before them.

23 Paul looked straight at the Council and said, "My brothers! My conscience is perfectly clear about my whole life before God, to this very day." [2]The High Priest Ananias ordered those who were standing close to Paul to strike him on the mouth. [3]Paul said to him, "God will certainly strike you—you whitewashed wall! You sit there to judge me according to the Law, yet you break the Law by ordering them to strike me!"

[4]The men close to Paul said to him, "You are insulting God's High Priest!"

[5]Paul answered, "I did not know, my brothers, that he was the High Priest. The scripture says, 'You must not speak evil of the ruler of your people.'"

[6]When Paul saw that some of the group were Sadducees and that others were Pharisees, he called out in the Council, "My brothers! I am a Pharisee, the son of Pharisees. I am on trial here because I hope that the dead will rise to life!"

[7]As soon as he said this, the Pharisees and Sadducees started to quarrel, and the group was divided. [8](For the Sadducees say that people will not rise from death, and that there are no angels or spirits; but the Pharisees believe in all three.) [9]The shouting became louder, and some of the teachers of the Law who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and protested strongly, "We cannot

find a thing wrong with this man! Perhaps a spirit or an angel really did speak to him!"

10The argument became so violent that the commander was afraid that Paul would be torn to pieces by them. So he ordered his soldiers to go down into the group and get Paul away from them, and take him into the fort.

11The following night the Lord stood by Paul and said, "Courage! You have given your witness to me here in Jerusalem, and you must do the same in Rome also."

The Plot against Paul's Life

12The next morning some Jews met together and made a plan. They took a vow that they would not eat or drink anything until they had killed Paul. 13There were more than forty of them who planned this together. 14Then they went to the chief priests and elders and said, "We have taken a solemn vow together not to eat a thing until we kill Paul. 15Now then, you and the Council send word to the Roman commander to bring Paul down to you, pretending that you want to get more accurate information about him. But we will be ready to kill him before he ever gets here."

16But the son of Paul's sister heard of the plot; so he went and entered the fort and told it to Paul. 17Then Paul called one of the officers and said to him, "Take this young man to the commander; he has something to tell him." 18The officer took him, led him to the commander and said, "The prisoner Paul called me and asked me to bring this young man to you, because he has something to say to you."

19The commander took him by the hand, led him off by himself, and asked him, "What do you have to tell me?"

20He said, "The Jewish authorities have agreed to ask you tomorrow to take Paul down to the Council, pretending that the Council wants to get more accurate information about him. 21But don't listen to them, because there are more than forty men who will be hiding and waiting for him. They have taken a vow not to eat or drink until they kill him. They are now ready to do it, and are waiting for your decision."

[22]The commander said, "Don't tell anyone that you have reported this to me." And he sent the young man away.

Paul Sent to Governor Felix

[23]Then the commander called two of his officers and said, "Get two hundred soldiers ready to go to Caesarea, together with seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen, and be ready to leave by nine o'clock tonight. [24]Provide some horses for Paul to ride, and get him safely through to Governor Felix." [25]Then the commander wrote a letter that went like this:

[26]"Claudius Lysias to his Excellency, the Governor Felix: Greetings. [27]The Jews seized this man and were about to kill him. I learned that he is a Roman citizen, so I went with my soldiers and rescued him. [28]I wanted to know what they were accusing him of, so I took him down to their Council. [29]I found out that he had not done a thing for which he deserved to die or be put in prison; the accusation against him had to do with questions about their own law. [30]And when I was informed that some Jews were making a plot against him, I decided to send him to you. I told his accusers to make their charges against him before you."

[31]The soldiers carried out their orders. They got Paul and took him that night as far as Antipatris. [32]The next day the foot soldiers returned to the fort and left the horsemen to go on with him. [33]They took him to Caesarea, delivered the letter to the Governor, and turned Paul over to him. [34]The Governor read the letter and asked Paul what province he was from. When he found out that he was from Cilicia, [35]he said, "I will hear you when your accusers arrive." Then he gave orders that Paul be kept under guard in Herod's palace.

Paul Accused by the Jews

24 Five days later the High Priest Ananias went to Caesarea with some elders and a lawyer named Tertullus. They appeared before Governor Felix and made their charges against Paul. [2]Tertullus was called and began to accuse Paul as follows:

"Your Excellency! Your wise leadership has brought

us a long period of peace, and many necessary reforms are being made for the good of our country. [3]We welcome this everywhere at all times, and we are deeply grateful to you. [4]I do not want to take up too much of your time, however, so I beg you to be kind and listen to our brief account. [5]We found this man to be a dangerous nuisance; he starts riots among the Jews all over the world, and is a leader of the party of the Nazarenes. [6]He also tried to defile the temple, and we arrested him. [We planned to judge him according to our own Law, [7]but the commander Lysias came in and with great violence took him from us. [8]Then Lysias gave orders that his accusers should come before you.] If you question this man, you yourself will be able to learn from him all the things that we are accusing him of." [9]The Jews joined in the accusation and said that all this was true.

Paul's Defense before Felix

[10]The Governor then motioned to Paul to speak, and Paul said,

"I know that you have been a judge over this nation for many years, and so I am happy to defend myself before you. [11]As you can find out for yourself, it was no more than twelve days ago that I went up to Jerusalem to worship. [12]The Jews did not find me arguing with anyone in the temple, nor did they find me stirring up the people, either in the synagogues or anywhere else in the city. [13]Nor can they give you proof of the accusations they now bring against me. [14]I do admit this to you: I worship the God of our ancestors by following that Way which they say is false. But I also believe in all the things written in the Law of Moses and the books of the prophets. [15]I have the same hope in God that these themselves hold, that all men, both the good and the bad, will rise from death. [16]And so I do my best always to have a clear conscience before God and men.

[17]"After being away from Jerusalem for several years, I went there to take some money to my own people and to offer sacrifices. [18]It was while I was doing this that they found me in the temple, after I had completed the ceremony of purification. There was no crowd with me, and no disorder. [19]But some Jews from the province of

Asia were there; they themselves ought to come before you and make their accusations, if they have anything against me. [20]Or let these men here tell what crime they found me guilty of when I stood before the Council— [21]except for the one thing I called out when I stood before them: 'I am being judged by you today for believing that the dead will rise to life.' "

[22]Then Felix, who was well informed about the Way, brought the hearing to a close. "I will decide your case," he told them, "when the commander Lysias arrives." [23]He ordered the officer in charge of Paul to keep him under guard, but to give him some freedom and allow his friends to provide for his needs.

Paul before Felix and Drusilla

[24]After some days Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish. He sent for Paul and listened to him as he talked about faith in Christ Jesus. [25]But as Paul went on discussing about goodness, self-control, and the coming Day of Judgment, Felix was afraid and said, "You may leave now. I will call you again when I get the chance." [26]At the same time he was hoping that Paul would give him some money; and for this reason he would call for him often and talk with him.

[27]After two years had passed, Porcius Festus took the place of Felix as Governor. Felix wanted to gain favor with the Jews, so he left Paul in prison.

Paul Appeals to the Emperor

25 Three days after Festus arrived in the province, he went from Caesarea to Jerusalem. [2]There the chief priests and the Jewish leaders brought their charges against Paul. They begged Festus [3]to do them the favor of having Paul come to Jerusalem, because they had made a plot to kill him on the way. [4]Festus answered, "Paul is being kept a prisoner in Caesarea, and I myself will be going back there soon. [5]Let your leaders go to Caesarea with me and accuse the man, if he has done anything wrong."

[6]Festus spent another eight or ten days with them, and then went to Caesarea. On the next day he sat down in the judgment court, and ordered Paul to be brought

in. 7When Paul arrived, the Jews who had come from
Jerusalem stood around him and started making many
serious charges against him, which they were not able to
prove. 8But Paul defended himself, "I have done nothing
wrong against the Law of the Jews, or the temple, or the
Roman Emperor."

9Festus wanted to gain favor with the Jews, so he
asked Paul, "Would you be willing to go to Jerusalem
and be tried on these charges before me there?"

10Paul said, "I am standing before the Emperor's
own judgment court, where I should be tried. I have
done no wrong to the Jews, as you yourself well know.
11If I have broken the law and done something for
which I deserve the death penalty, I do not ask to
escape it. But if there is no truth in the charges they
bring against me, no one can hand me over to them
I appeal to the Emperor."

12Then Festus, after conferring with his advisers, an-
swered, "You have appealed to the Emperor, so to the
Emperor you will go."

Paul before Agrippa and Bernice

13Some time later King Agrippa and Bernice came to
Caesarea to pay a visit of welcome to Festus. 14After
they had been there several days, Festus explained
Paul's situation to the king. "There is a man here who
was left a prisoner by Felix; 15and when I went to Jerusa-
lem, the Jewish chief priests and elders brought charges
against him and asked me to condemn him. 16But I told
them that the Romans are not in the habit of handing
over any man accused of a crime before he has met his
accusers face to face, and has the chance of defending
himself against the accusation. 17When they came here,
then, I lost no time, but on the very next day I sat in the
judgment court and ordered the man to be brought in.
18His opponents stood up, but they did not accuse him
of any of the evil crimes that I thought they would. 19All
they had were some arguments with him about their
own religion and about a man named Jesus, who has
died; but Paul claims that he is alive. 20I was undecided
about how I could get information on these matters, so
I asked Paul if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem

and be tried there on these charges. [21]But Paul appealed; he asked to be kept under guard and let the Emperor decide his case. So I gave orders for him to be kept under guard until I could send him to the Emperor."

[22]Agrippa said to Festus, "I would like to hear this man myself."

"You will hear him tomorrow," Festus answered.

[23]The next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp and ceremony, and entered the audience hall with the military chiefs and the leading men of the city. Festus gave the order and Paul was brought in. [24]Festus said, "King Agrippa, and all who are here with us: You see this man against whom all the Jewish people, both here and in Jerusalem, have brought complaints to me. They scream that he should not live any longer. [25]But I could not find that he had done anything for which he deserved the death sentence. And since he himself made an appeal to the Emperor, I have decided to send him. [26]But I do not have anything definite about him to write to the Emperor. So I have brought him here before you—and especially before you, King Agrippa!—so that, after investigating his case, I may have something to write. [27]For it seems unreasonable to me to send a prisoner without clearly indicating the charges against him."

Paul Defends Himself before Agrippa

26 Agrippa said to Paul, "You have permission to speak on your own behalf." Paul stretched out his hand and defended himself as follows:

[2]"King Agrippa! I consider myself fortunate that today I am to defend myself before you from all the things the Jews accuse me of. [3]This is especially true because you know so well all the Jewish customs and questions. I ask you, then, to listen to me with patience.

[4]"All the Jews know how I have lived ever since I was young. They know from the beginning how I have spent my whole life in my own country and in Jerusalem. [5]They have always known, if they are willing to testify, that from the very first I have lived as a member of the strictest party of our religion, the Pharisees. [6]And now I stand here to be tried because I hope in the promise that God made to our ancestors—[7]the very promise that

all twelve tribes of our people hope to receive, as they worship God day and night. And it is because of this hope, your Majesty, that I am being accused by the Jews! 8Why do you Jews find it impossible to believe that God raises the dead?

9"I myself thought that I should do everything I could against the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10That is what I did in Jerusalem. I received authority from the chief priests and put many of God's people in prison; and when they were sentenced to death, I also voted for it. 11Many times I had them punished in all the synagogues, and tried to make them deny their faith. I was so furious with them that I even went to foreign cities to persecute them."

Paul Tells of His Conversion

(Also Acts 9.1–19; 22.6–16)

12"It was for this purpose that I went to Damascus with the authority and orders from the chief priests. 13It was on the road at midday, your Majesty, that I saw a light much brighter than the sun shining from the sky around me and the men traveling with me. 14All of us fell to the ground, and I heard a voice say to me in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul! Why are you persecuting me? You hurt yourself by hitting back, like an ox kicking against its owner's stick.' 15"Who are you, Lord?' I asked. And the Lord said: 'I am Jesus, whom you persecute. 16But get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as my servant; you are to tell others what you have seen of me today, and what I will show you in the future. 17I will save you from the people of Israel and from the Gentiles, to whom I will send you. 18You are to open their eyes and turn them from the darkness to the light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that through their faith in me they will have their sins forgiven and receive their place among God's chosen people.'"

Paul Tells of His Work

19"And so, King Agrippa, I did not disobey the vision I had from heaven. 20First in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and then in the whole country of the Jews and among the Gentiles, I preached that they must repent of

their sins and turn to God, and do the things that would show they had repented. [21]It was for this reason that the Jews seized me while I was in the temple, and tried to kill me. [22]But to this very day I have been helped by God, and so I stand here giving my witness to all, to the small and great alike. What I say is the very same thing the prophets and Moses said was going to happen: [23]that the Messiah must suffer and be the first one to rise from death, to announce the light of salvation to the Jews and to the Gentiles."

[24]As Paul defended himself in this way, Festus shouted at him, "You are mad, Paul! Your great learning is driving you mad!"

[25]Paul answered, "I am not mad, your Excellency! The words I speak are true and sober. [26]King Agrippa! I can speak to you with all boldness, because you know about these things. I am sure that you have taken notice of every one of them, for this thing has not happened hidden away in a corner. [27]King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do!"

[28]Agrippa said to Paul, "In this short time do you think you will make me a Christian?"

[29]"Whether a short time or a long time," Paul answered, "my prayer to God is that you and all the rest of you who are listening to me today might become what I am—except, of course, for these chains!"

[30]Then the King, the Governor, Bernice, and all the others got up, [31]and after leaving they said to each other, "This man has not done anything for which he should die or be put in prison." [32]And Agrippa said to Festus, "This man could have been released if he had not appealed to the Emperor."

Paul Sails for Rome

27 When it was decided that we should sail to Italy, they handed Paul and some other prisoners over to Julius, an officer in the Roman army regiment called "The Emperor's Regiment." [2]We went aboard a ship from Adramyttium, which was ready to leave for the seaports of the province of Asia, and sailed away. Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us [3]The next day we arrived at Sidon. Julius was kind to Paul and allowed him to go and see his friends, to be

given what he needed. 4We went on from there, and because the winds were blowing against us we sailed on the sheltered side of the island of Cyprus. 5We crossed over the sea off Cilicia and Pamphylia, and came to Myra, in Lycia. 6There the officer found a ship from Alexandria that was going to sail for Italy, so he put us aboard.

7We sailed slowly for several days, and with great difficulty finally arrived off the town of Cnidus. The wind would not let us go any farther in that direction, so we sailed down the sheltered side of the island of Crete, passing by Cape Salmone. 8We kept close to the coast, and with great difficulty came to a place called Safe Harbors, not far from the town of Lasea.

9We spent a long time there, until it became dangerous to continue the voyage, because by now the day of Atonement was already past. So Paul gave them this advice, 10"Men, I see that our voyage from here on will be dangerous; there will be great damage to the cargo and to the ship, and loss of life as well." 11But the army officer was convinced by what the captain and the owner of the ship said, and not by what Paul said. 12The harbor was not a good one to spend the winter in; so most of the men were in favor of putting out to sea and trying to reach Phoenix, if possible. It is a harbor in Crete that faces southwest and northwest, and they could spend the winter there.

The Storm at Sea

13A soft wind from the south began to blow, and the men thought that they could carry out their plan; so they pulled up the anchor and sailed as close as possible along the coast of Crete. 14But soon a very strong wind —the one called "Northeaster" —blew down from the island. 15It hit the ship, and since it was impossible to keep the ship headed into the wind, we gave up trying and let it be carried along by the wind. 16We got some shelter when we passed to the south of the little island of Cauda. There, with some difficulty, we managed to make the ship's boat secure. 17They pulled it aboard, and then fastened some ropes tight around the ship. They were afraid that they might run into the sandbanks off the

coast of Libya; so they lowered the sail and let the ship be carried by the wind. 18The violent storm continued, so on the next day they began to throw the ship's cargo overboard, 19and on the following day they threw the ship's equipment overboard with their own hands. 20For many days we could not see the sun or the stars, and the wind kept on blowing very hard. We finally gave up all hope of being saved.

21After the men had gone a long time without food, Paul stood before them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me and not have sailed from Crete; then we would have avoided all this damage and loss. 22But now I beg you, take courage! Not one of you will lose his life; only the ship will be lost. 23For last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship came to me 24and said, 'Don't be afraid, Paul! You must stand before the Emperor; and God, in his goodness, has given you the lives of all those who are sailing with you.' 25And so, men, take courage! For I trust in God that it will be just as I was told. 26But we will be driven ashore on some island."

27It was the fourteenth night, and we were being driven by the storm on the Mediterranean. About midnight the sailors suspected that we were getting close to land. 28So they dropped a line with a weight tied to it and found that the water was one hundred and twenty feet deep; a little later they did the same and found that it was ninety feet deep. 29They were afraid that our ship would go on the rocks, so they lowered four anchors from the back of the ship and prayed for daylight. 30The sailors tried to escape from the ship; they lowered the boat into the water and pretended that they were going to put out some anchors from the front of the ship. 31But Paul said to the army officer and soldiers, "If these sailors don't stay on board, you cannot be saved." 32So the soldiers cut the ropes that held the boat and let it go.

33Day was about to come, and Paul begged them all to eat some food, "You have been waiting for fourteen days now, and all this time you have not eaten a thing. 34I beg you, then, eat some food; you need it in order to survive. Not even a hair of your heads will be lost." 35After saying this, Paul took some bread, gave thanks

to God before them all, broke it, and began to eat.
36They took courage, and every one of them also ate
some food. 37There was a total of two hundred and
seventy-six of us on board. 38After everyone had eaten
enough, they lightened the ship by throwing the wheat
into the sea.

The Shipwreck

39When day came, the sailors did not recognize the
coast, but they noticed a bay with a beach and decided
that, if possible, they would run the ship aground there.
40So they cut off the anchors and let them sink in the sea,
and at the same time they untied the ropes that held the
steering oars. Then they raised the sail at the front of the
ship so that the wind would blow the ship forward, and
headed for shore. 41But the ship hit a sandbank and went
aground; the front part of the ship got stuck and could
not move, while the back part was being broken to
pieces by the violence of the waves.

Holding on to the planks

42The soldiers made a plan to kill all the prisoners, so
that none of them would swim ashore and escape. 43But
the army officer wanted to save Paul, so he stopped them
from doing this. Instead, he ordered all the men who
could swim to jump overboard first and swim ashore;
44the rest were to follow, holding on to the planks or to
some broken pieces of the ship. And this was how we all
got safely ashore.

In Malta

28 When we were safely ashore, we learned that the island was called Malta. [2]The natives there were very friendly to us. It had started to rain and was cold, so they built a fire and made us all welcome. [3]Paul gathered up a bundle of sticks and was putting them on the fire when a snake came out, on account of the heat, and fastened itself to his hand. [4]The natives saw the snake hanging on Paul's hand and said to one another, "This man must be a murderer, but Fate will not let him live, even though he escaped from the sea." [5]But Paul shook the snake off into the fire without being harmed at all. [6]They were waiting for him to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after waiting for a long time and not seeing anything unusual happening to him, they changed their minds and said, "He is a god!"

[7]Not far from that place were some fields that belonged to Publius, the chief of the island. He welcomed us kindly and for three days we were his guests. [8]Publius' father was in bed, sick with fever and dysentery. Paul went into his room, prayed, placed his hands on him, and healed him. [9]When this happened, all the other sick people on the island came and were healed. [10]They gave us many gifts, and when we sailed they put on board what we needed for the voyage.

From Malta to Rome

[11]After three months we sailed away on a ship from Alexandria, called "The Twin Gods," which had spent the winter in the island. [12]We arrived in the city of Syracuse and stayed there for three days. [13]From there we sailed on and arrived in the city of Rhegium. The next day a wind began to blow from the south, and in two days we came to the town of Puteoli. [14]We found some believers there who asked us to stay with them a week. And so we came to Rome. [15]The brothers in Rome heard about us and came as far as Market of Appius and Three Inns to meet us. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.

In Rome

16When we arrived in Rome, Paul was allowed to live
by himself with a soldier guarding him.
17After three days Paul called the local Jewish lead-
ers to a meeting. When they gathered, he said to them,
"My brothers! Even though I did nothing against our
people or the customs that we received from our
ancestors, I was made a prisoner in Jerusalem and
handed over to the Romans. 18They questioned me
and wanted to release me, because they found that I
had done nothing for which I deserved to die. 19But
when the Jews opposed this, I was forced to appeal to
the Emperor, even though I had no accusation to make
against my own people. 20That is why I asked to see
you and talk with you; because I have this chain on me
for the sake of him for whom the people of Israel
hope."
21They said to him, "We have not received any let-
ters from Judea about you, nor have any of our broth-
ers come from there with any news, or to say anything
bad about you. 22But we would like to hear your ideas,
because we know that everywhere people speak
against this party that you belong to."
23So they set a date with Paul, and a larger number
of them came that day to where Paul was staying.
From morning till night he explained and gave them
his message about the Kingdom of God. He tried to
convince them about Jesus by quoting from the Law of
Moses and the writings of the prophets. 24Some of
them were convinced by his words, but others would
not believe. 25So they left, disagreeing among them-
selves, after Paul had said this one thing, "How well
the Holy Spirit spoke through the prophet Isaiah to
your ancestors! 26For he said,

'Go and say to this people:
You will listen and listen, but not under-
stand:
you will look and look, but not see.
27 Because this people's minds are dull,
they have stopped up their ears,
and have closed their eyes.
Otherwise, their eyes would see,

their ears would hear,
their minds would understand,
and they would turn to me, says God,
and I would heal them.'"

[28]And Paul concluded, "You are to know, then, that God's message of salvation has been sent to the Gentiles. They will listen!" [29]After Paul said this, the Jews left, arguing violently among themselves.]

[30]For two years Paul lived there in a place he rented for himself, and welcomed all who came to see him. [31]He preached about the Kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ, speaking with all boldness and freedom.

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS

1 From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, and an apostle
chosen and called by God to preach his Good
News.
2The Good News was promised long ago by God
through his prophets, and written in the Holy Scriptures. 3It is about his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: as to
his humanity, he was born a descendant of David; 4as to
his divine holiness, he was shown with great power to
be the Son of God by being raised from death. 5Through
him God gave me the privilege of being an apostle, for
the sake of Christ, in order to lead people of all nations
to believe and obey. 6This also includes you who are in
Rome, whom God has called to belong to Jesus Christ.
7And so I write to all of you in Rome whom God loves
and has called to be his own people:
May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give
you grace and peace.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

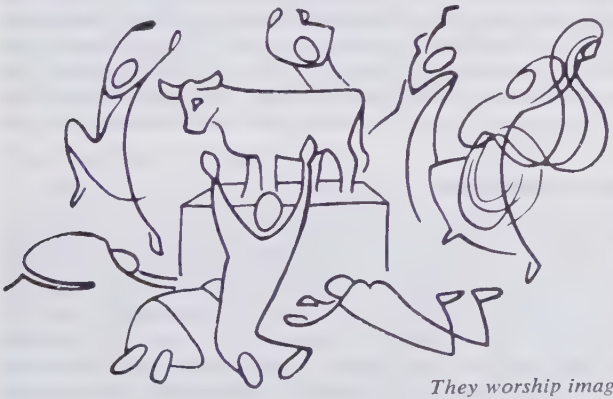
8First, I thank my God, through Jesus Christ, for all
of you; because the whole world is hearing of your faith.
9God can prove that what I say is true —the God whom
I serve with all my heart by preaching the Good News
about his Son. God knows that I always remember you
10every time I pray. I ask that God, in his good will, may
at last make it possible for me to visit you now. 11For I
want very much to see you in order to share a spiritual
blessing with you, to make you strong. 12What I mean
is that both you and I will be helped at the same time,
you by my faith and I by your faith.
13You must remember this, my brothers: many times
I have planned to visit you, but something has always
kept me from doing so. I want to win converts among
you, too, as I have among other Gentiles. 14For I have
an obligation to all peoples, to the civilized and to the
savage, to the educated and to the ignorant. 15So then,
I am eager to preach the Good News to you also who
live in Rome.

The Power of the Gospel

16I have complete confidence in the gospel; it is God's
power to save all who believe, first the Jews and also the
Gentiles. 17For the gospel reveals how God puts men
right with himself: it is through faith, from beginning to
end. As the scripture says, "He who is put right with
God through faith shall live."

The Guilt of Mankind

18God's wrath is revealed coming down from heaven
upon all the sin and evil of men whose evil ways prevent
the truth from being known. 19God punishes them, be-
cause what men can know about God is plain to them.
God himself made it plain to them. 20Ever since God
created the world, his invisible qualities, both his eternal
power and his divine nature, have been clearly seen.
Men can perceive them in the things that God has made.
So they have no excuse at all! 21They know God, but
they do not give him the honor that belongs to him, nor
do they thank him. Instead, their thoughts have become
complete nonsense and their empty minds are filled with
darkness. 22They say they are wise, but they are fools;
23instead of worshiping the immortal God, they worship



They worship images

images made to look like mortal man or birds or animals or reptiles.

[24]Because men are such fools, God has given them over to do the filthy things their hearts desire, and they do shameful things with each other. [25]They exchange the truth about God for a lie; they worship and serve what God has created instead of the Creator himself, who is to be praised forever! Amen.

[26]Because men do this, God has given them over to shameful passions. Even the women pervert the natural use of their sex by unnatural acts. [27]In the same way the men give up natural sexual relations with women and burn with passion for each other. Men do shameful things with each other, and as a result they themselves are punished as they deserve for their wrongdoing.

[28]Because men refuse to keep in mind the true knowledge about God, he has given them over to corrupted minds, so that they do the things that they should not. [29]They are filled with all kinds of wickedness, evil, greed, and vice; they are full of jealousy, murder, fighting, deceit, and malice. They gossip, [30]and speak evil of one another; they are hateful to God, insolent, proud, and boastful; they think of more ways to do evil; they disobey their parents; [31]they are immoral; they do not keep their promises, and they show no kindness or pity to others. [32]They know that God's law says that people who live in this way deserve death. Yet, not only do they continue to do these very things, but they also approve of others who do them.

God's Judgment

2 Do you, my friend, pass judgment on others? You have no excuse at all, whoever you are. For when you judge others, but do the same things that they do, you condemn yourself. [2]We know that God is right when he judges the people who do such things as these. [3]But you, my friend, do these very things yourself for which you pass judgment on others! Do you think you will escape God's judgment? [4]Or perhaps you despise his great kindness, tolerance, and patience. Surely you know that God is kind because he is trying to lead you

to repent. [5]But you have a hard and stubborn heart. So then, you are making your own punishment even greater on the Day when God's wrath and right judgments will be revealed. [6]For God will reward every person according to what he has done. [7]Some men keep on doing good, and seek glory, honor, and immortal life; to them God will give eternal life. [8]Other men are selfish and reject what is right, to follow what is wrong; on them God will pour his wrath and anger. [9]There will be suffering and pain for all men who do what is evil, for the Jews first and also for the Gentiles. [10]But God will give glory, honor, and peace to all who do what is good, to the Jews first, and also to the Gentiles. [11]For God judges everyone by the same standard.

[12]The Gentiles do not have the Law of Moses; they sin and are lost apart from the Law. The Jews have the Law; they sin and are judged by the Law. [13]For it is not by hearing the Law that men are put right with God, but by doing what the Law commands. [14]The Gentiles do not have the Law; but whenever of their own free will they do what the Law commands, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the Law. [15]Their conduct shows that what the Law commands is written in their hearts. Their consciences also show that this is true, since their thoughts sometimes accuse them and sometimes defend them. [16]And so, according to the Good News I preach, this is how it will be on that Day when God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the secret thoughts of men.

The Jews and the Law

[17]What about you? You call yourself a Jew; you depend on the Law and boast about God; [18]you know what God wants you to do, and you have learned from the Law to choose what is right; [19]you are sure that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in darkness, [20]an instructor for the foolish, and a teacher for the young. You are certain that in the Law you have the full content of knowledge and of truth. [21]You teach others —why don't you teach yourself? You preach, "Do not steal"—but do you yourself steal? [22]You say, "Do not commit adultery"—but do you commit adultery? You

detest idols—but do you rob temples? 23You boast about having God's law—but do you bring shame on God by breaking his law? 24The scripture says, "Because of you Jews, the Gentiles speak evil of God's name."

25If you obey the Law, your circumcision is of value; but if you disobey the Law, you might as well never have been circumcised. 26If the Gentile, who is not circumcised, obeys the commands of the Law, will not God regard him as though he were circumcised? 27And so you Jews will be condemned by the Gentiles, because you break the Law, even though you have it written down and are circumcised, while they obey the Law, even though they are not physically circumcised. 28After all, who is a real Jew, truly circumcised? Not the man who is a Jew on the outside, whose circumcision is a physical thing. 29Rather, the real Jew is the man who is a Jew on the inside, that is, whose heart has been circumcised, which is the work of God's Spirit, not of the written Law. This man receives his praise from God, not from men.

3 Do the Jews have any advantage over the Gentiles, then? Or is there any value in being circumcised? 2Much, indeed, in every way! In the first place, God trusted his message to the Jews. 3What if some of them were not faithful? Does it mean that for this reason God will not be faithful? 4Certainly not! God must be true, even though every man is a liar. As the scripture says,

"You must be shown to be right when you
speak;
you must win your case when you are
being tried."

5But what if our doing wrong serves to show up more clearly God's doing right? What can we say? That God does wrong when he punishes us? (I speak here as men do.) 6By no means! If God is not just, how can he judge the world?

7But what if my untruth serves God's glory by making his truth stand out more clearly? Why should I still be condemned as a sinner? 8Why not say, then, "Let us do evil that good may come"? Some people, indeed, have insulted me by accusing me of saying this very thing! They will be condemned, as they should be.

No Man Is Righteous

9 Well then, are we Jews in any better condition than
the Gentiles? Not at all! I have already shown that Jews
and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin. 10 As
the Scriptures say:

"There is no one who is righteous,
11 no one who understands,
or who seeks for God.
12 All men have turned away from God;
they have all gone wrong;
no one does what is good, not even one.
13 Their mouths are like an open grave;
wicked lies roll off their tongues,
and deadly words, like snake's poison,
from their lips;
14 their mouths are full of bitter curses.
15 They are quick to hurt and kill;
16 they leave ruin and misery wherever
they go.
17 They have not known the path of peace,
18 nor have they learned to fear God."

19 Now we know that everything in the Law applies to
those who live under the Law, in order to stop all human
excuses and bring the whole world under God's judg-
ment. 20 Because no man is put right in God's sight by
doing what the Law requires; what the Law does is to
make man know that he has sinned.

How God Puts Men Right

21 But now God's way of putting men right with him-
self has been revealed, and it has nothing to do with law.
The Law and the prophets gave their witness to it:
22 God puts men right through their faith in Jesus Christ.
God does this to all who believe in Christ, because there
is no difference at all: 23 all men have sinned and are far
away from God's saving presence. 24 But by the free gift
of God's grace they are all put right with him through
Christ Jesus, who sets them free. 25 God offered him so
that by his death he should become the means by which
men's sins are forgiven, through their faith in him. God
did this in order to demonstrate his righteousness. In the
past, he was patient and overlooked men's sins; 26 but

now in the present time he deals with men's sins, to demonstrate his righteousness. In this way God shows that he himself is righteous and that he puts right everyone who believes in Jesus.

[27]What, then, can we boast about? Nothing! And what is the reason for this? Is it that we obey the Law? No, but that we believe. [28]For we conclude that a man is put right with God only through faith, and not by doing what the Law commands. [29]Or is God only the God of the Jews? Is he not the God of the Gentiles also? Of course he is. [30]God is one, and he will put the Jews right with himself on the basis of their faith, and the Gentiles right through their faith. [31]Does this mean that we do away with the Law by this faith? No, not at all; instead, we uphold the Law.

The Example of Abraham

4 What shall we say, then, of Abraham, our racial ancestor? What was his experience? [2]If he was put right with God by the things he did, he would have something to boast about. But he cannot boast before God. [3]The scripture says, "Abraham believed God, and because of his faith God accepted him as righteous." [4]A man who works is paid; his wages are not regarded as a gift, but as something that he has earned. [5]But the man who has faith, not works, who believes in the God who declares the guilty to be innocent, it is his faith that God takes into account in order to put him right with himself. [6]This is what David meant when he spoke of the happiness of the man whom God accepts as righteous, apart from any works:

[7]"Happy are those whose wrongs God has
forgiven,
whose sins he has covered over!
[8] Happy is the man whose sins the Lord will
not keep account of!"

[9]Does this happiness that David spoke of belong only to those who are circumcised? No. It belongs also to those who are not circumcised. For we have quoted the scripture, "Abraham believed God, and because of his faith God accepted him as righteous." [10]When did this take place? Was it before or after Abraham was circum-

cised? Before, not after. [11]He was circumcised later, and his circumcision was a sign to prove that because of Abraham's faith God had accepted him as righteous before he had been circumcised. And so Abraham is the spiritual father of all who believe in God and are accepted as righteous by him, even though they are not circumcised. [12]He is also the father of those who are circumcised, not just because they are circumcised, but because they live the same life of faith that our father Abraham lived before he was circumcised.

God's Promise Received through Faith

[13]God promised Abraham and his descendants that the world would belong to him. This promise was made, not because Abraham obeyed the Law, but because he believed and was accepted as righteous by God. [14]For if what God promises is to be given to those who obey the Law, then man's faith means nothing and God's promise is worthless. [15]The Law brings God's wrath; but where there is no law, there is no disobeying of the law.

[16]The promise was based on faith, then, in order that the promise should be guaranteed as God's free gift to all of Abraham's descendants—not just those who obey the Law, but also those who believe as Abraham did. For Abraham is the spiritual father of us all; [17]as the scripture says, "I have made you father of many nations." So the promise is good in the sight of God, in whom Abraham believed—the God who brings the dead to life and whose command brings into being what did not exist. [18]Abraham believed and hoped, when there was no hope, and so became "the father of many nations." Just as the scripture says, "Your descendants will be this many." [19]He was almost one hundred years old; but his faith did not weaken when he thought of his body, which was already practically dead, or of the fact that Sarah could not have children. [20]His faith did not leave him, and he did not doubt God's promise; his faith filled him with power, and he gave praise to God. [21]He was absolutely sure that God would be able to do what he had promised. [22]That is why Abraham, through faith, "was accepted as righteous by God." [23]The words "he was accepted as righteous" were not written for him alone.

[24]They were written also for us who are to be accepted as righteous, who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from death. [25]He was given over to die because of our sins, and was raised to life to put us right with God.

Right with God

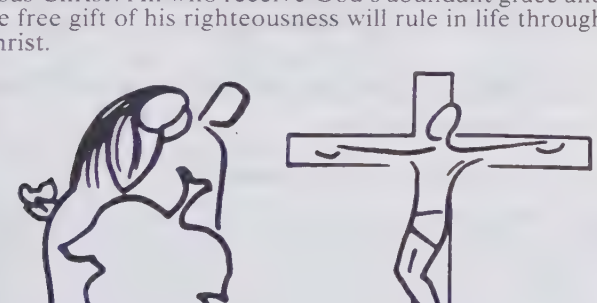
5 Now that we have been put right with God through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. [2]He has brought us, by faith, into this experience of God's grace, in which we now live. We rejoice, then, in the hope we have of sharing God's glory! [3]And we also rejoice in our troubles, because we know that trouble produces endurance, [4]endurance brings God's approval, and his approval creates hope. [5]This hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by means of the Holy Spirit, who is God's gift to us.

[6]For when we were still helpless, Christ died for the wicked, at the time that God chose. [7]It is a difficult thing for someone to die for a righteous person. It may be that someone might dare to die for a good person. [8]But God has shown us how much he loves us; it was while we were still sinners that Christ died for us! [9]By his death we are now put right with God; how much more, then, will we be saved by him from God's wrath. [10]We were God's enemies, but he made us his friends through the death of his Son. Now that we are God's friends, how much more will we be saved by Christ's life! [11]But that is not all; we rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has now made us God's friends.

Adam and Christ

[12]Sin came into the world through one man, and his sin brought death with it. As a result, death spread to the whole human race, because all men sinned. [13]There was sin in the world before the Law was given; but where there is no law, no account is kept of sins. [14]But from the time of Adam to the time of Moses death ruled over all men, even over those who did not sin as Adam did by disobeying God's command.

Adam was a figure of the one who was to come. [15]But the two are not the same, because God's free gift is not like Adam's sin. It is true that many men died because of the sin of that one man. But God's grace is much greater, and so is his free gift to so many men through the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ. [16]And there is a difference between God's gift and the sin of one man. After the one sin came the judgment of "Guilty"; but after so many sins comes the undeserved gift of "Not guilty!" [17]It is true that through the sin of one man death began to rule, because of that one man. But how much greater is the result of what was done by the one man, Jesus Christ! All who receive God's abundant grace and the free gift of his righteousness will rule in life through Christ.



One righteous act sets all men free and gives them life

[18]So then, as the one sin condemned all men, in the same way the one righteous act sets all men free and gives them life. [19]And just as many men were made sinners as the result of the disobedience of one man, in the same way many will be put right with God as the result of the obedience of the one man.

[20]Law was introduced in order to increase wrongdoing; but where sin increased, God's grace increased much more. [21]So then, just as sin ruled by means of death, so also God's grace rules by means of righteousness, leading us to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Set free from the power of sin

Dead to Sin but Alive in Christ

6 What shall we say, then? That we should continue
to live in sin so that God's grace will increase?
[2]Certainly not! We have died to sin—how then can we
go on living in it? [3]For surely you know this: when we
were baptized into union with Christ Jesus, we were
baptized into union with his death. [4]By our baptism,
then, we were buried with him and shared his death, in
order that, just as Christ was raised from death by the
glorious power of the Father, so also we might live a new
life.

[5]For if we became one with him in dying as he did,
in the same way we shall be one with him by being
raised to life as he was. [6]And we know this: our old
being has been put to death with Christ on his cross,
in order that the power of the sinful self might be
destroyed, so that we should no longer be the slaves of
sin. [7]For when a person dies he is set free from the
power of sin. [8]If we have died with Christ, we believe
that we will also live with him. [9]For we know that
Christ has been raised from death and will never die
again—death has no more power over him. [10]The
death he died was death to sin, once and for all; and

the life he now lives is life to God. [11]In the same way you are to think of yourselves as dead to sin but alive to God in union with Christ Jesus.

[12]Sin must no longer rule in your mortal bodies, so that you obey the desires of your natural self. [13]Nor must you surrender any part of yourselves to sin, to be used for wicked purposes. Instead, give yourselves to God, as men who have been brought from death to life, and surrender your whole being to him to be used for righteous purposes. [14]Sin must not rule over you; you do not live under law but under God's grace.

Slaves of Righteousness

[15]What, then? Shall we sin, because we are not under law but under God's grace? By no means! [16]Surely you know that when you surrender yourselves as slaves to obey someone, you are in fact the slaves of the master you obey—either of sin, which results in death, or of obedience, which results in being put right with God. [17]But thanks be to God! For at one time you were slaves to sin; but then you obeyed with all your heart the truths found in the teaching you received. [18]You were set free from sin and became the slaves of righteousness. [19]I use ordinary words because of the weakness of your natural selves. At one time you surrendered yourselves entirely as slaves to impurity and wickedness, for wicked purposes. In the same way you must now surrender yourselves entirely as slaves of righteousness, for holy purposes.

[20]When you were the slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness. [21]What did you gain from doing the things that you are ashamed of now? The result of those things is death! [22]But now you have been set free from sin and are the slaves of God; your gain is a life fully dedicated to him, and the result is eternal life. [23]For sin pays its wage—death; but God's free gift is eternal life in union with Christ Jesus our Lord.

An Illustration from Marriage

7 Certainly you understand what I am about to say, my brothers, because all of you know about law. The law rules over a man only as long as he lives. [2]A married woman, for example, is bound by the law to her

husband as long as he lives; but if he dies, then she is free from the law that bound her to him. [3]So then, if she lives with another man while her husband is alive, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is legally a free woman, and does not commit adultery if she marries another man. [4]That is the way it is with you, my brothers. You also have died, as far as the Law is concerned, because you are part of the body of Christ; and now you belong to him who was raised from death in order that we might be useful in the service of God. [5]For when we lived according to our human nature, the sinful desires stirred up by the Law were at work in our bodies, and we were useful in the service of death. [6]Now, however, we are free from the Law, because we died to that which once held us prisoners. No longer do we serve in the old way of a written law, but in the new way of the Spirit.

Law and Sin

[7]What shall we say, then? That the Law itself is sinful? Of course not! But it was the Law that made me know what sin is. I would not have known what it is to covet if the Law had not said, "Do not covet." [8]Sin found its chance to stir up all kinds of covetousness in me by working through the commandment. For sin is a dead thing apart from law. [9]I myself was once alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life, [10]and I died. And the commandment which was meant to bring life, in my case brought death. [11]Sin found its chance and deceived me by working through the commandment; by means of the commandment sin killed me.

[12]So then, the Law itself is holy, and the commandment is holy, right, and good. [13]Does this mean that what is good brought about my death? By no means! It was sin that did it; by using what is good, sin brought death to me in order that its true nature as sin might be revealed. And so, by means of the commandment, sin is shown to be even more terribly sinful.

The Conflict in Man

[14]We know that the Law is spiritual; but I am mortal

man, sold as a slave to sin. [15]I do not understand what I do; for I don't do what I would like to do, but instead I do what I hate. [16]When I do what I don't want to do, this shows that I agree that the Law is right. [17]So I am not really the one who does this thing; rather it is the sin that lives in me. [18]I know that good does not live in me —that is, in my human nature. For even though the desire to do good is in me, I am not able to do it. [19]I don't do the good I want to do; instead, I do the evil that I do not want to do. [20]If I do what I don't want to do, this means that no longer am I the one who does it; instead, it is the sin that lives in me.

[21]So I find that this law is at work: when I want to do what is good, what is evil is the only choice I have. [22]My inner being delights in the law of God. [23]But I see a different law at work in my body —a law that fights against the law that my mind approves of. It makes me a prisoner to the law of sin which is at work in my body. [24]What an unhappy man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is taking me to death? [25]Thanks be to God, through our Lord Jesus Christ!

This, then, is my condition: by myself I can serve God's law only with my mind, while my human nature serves the law of sin.

Life in the Spirit

8 There is no condemnation now for those who live in union with Christ Jesus. [2]For the law of the Spirit, which brings us life in union with Christ Jesus, has set me free from the law of sin and death. [3]What the Law could not do, because human nature was weak, God did. He condemned sin in human nature by sending his own Son, who came with a nature like man's sinful nature to do away with sin. [4]God did this so that the righteous demands of the Law might be fully satisfied in us who live according to the Spirit, not according to human nature. [5]Those who live as their human nature tells them to, have their minds controlled by what human nature wants. Those who live as the Spirit tells them to, have their minds controlled by what the Spirit wants. [6]To have your mind controlled by human nature results in death; to have your mind controlled by the

Spirit results in life and peace. [7]And so a man becomes an enemy of God when his mind is controlled by human nature; for he does not obey God's law, and in fact he cannot obey it. [8]Those who obey their human nature cannot please God.

[9]But you do not live as your human nature tells you to; you live as the Spirit tells you to -if, in fact, God's Spirit lives in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. [10]But if Christ lives in you, although your bodies are going to die because of sin, yet the Spirit is life for you because you have been put right with God. [11]If the Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from death, lives in you, then he who raised Christ from death will also give life to your mortal bodies by the presence of his Spirit in you.

[12]So then, my brothers, we have an obligation, but not to live as our human nature wants us to. [13]For if you live according to your human nature, you are going to die; but if, by the Spirit, you kill your sinful actions, you will live. [14]Those who are led by God's Spirit are God's sons. [15]For the Spirit that God has given you does not make you a slave and cause you to be afraid; instead, the Spirit makes you God's sons, and by the Spirit's power we cry to God, "Father! my Father!" [16]God's Spirit joins himself to our spirits to declare that we are God's children. [17]Since we are his children, we will possess the blessings he keeps for his people, and we will also possess with Christ what God has kept for him; for if we share Christ's suffering, we will also share his glory.

The Future Glory

[18]I consider that what we suffer at this present time cannot be compared at all with the glory that is going to be revealed to us. [19]All of creation waits with eager longing for God to reveal his sons. [20]For creation was condemned to become worthless, not of its own will, but because God willed it to be so. Yet there was this hope, [21]that creation itself would one day be set free from its slavery to decay, and share the glorious freedom of the children of God. [22]For we know that up to the present time all of creation groans with pain like the pain of

childbirth. [23]But not just creation alone; we who have the Spirit as the first of God's gifts, we also groan within ourselves as we wait for God to make us his sons and set our whole being free. [24]For it was by hope that we were saved; but if we see what we hope for, then it is not really hope. For who hopes for something that he sees? [25]But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

[26]In the same way the Spirit also comes to help us, weak that we are. For we do not know how we ought to pray; the Spirit himself pleads with God for us, in groans that words cannot express. [27]And God, who sees into the hearts of men, knows what the thought of the Spirit is; because the Spirit pleads with God on behalf of his people and in accordance with his will.

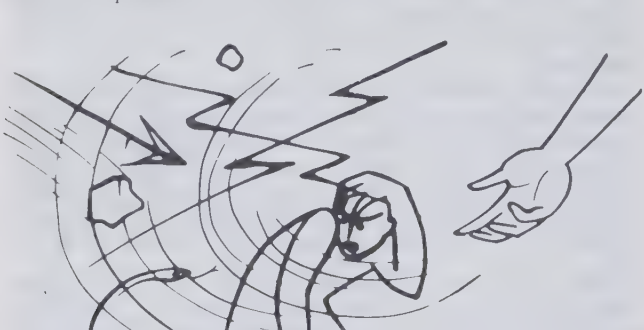
[28]We know that in all things God works for good with those who love him, those whom he has called according to his purpose. [29]Those whom God had already chosen he had also set apart to become like his Son, so that the Son would be the first among many brothers. [30]And so God called those that he had set apart; and those that he called he also put right with himself; and with those that he put right with himself he also shared his glory.

God's Love in Christ Jesus

[31]Faced with all this, what can we say? If God is for us, who can be against us? [32]He did not even keep back his own Son, but offered him for us all! He gave us his Son—will he not also freely give us all things? [33]Who will accuse God's chosen people? God himself declares them not guilty! [34]Can anyone, then, condemn them? Christ Jesus is the one who died, or rather, who was raised to life and is at the right side of God. He pleads with God for us! [35]Who, then, can separate us from the love of Christ? Can trouble do it, or hardship, or persecution, or hunger, or poverty, or danger, or death? [36]As the scripture says,

> "For your sake we are in danger of death
> the whole day long;
> we are treated like sheep that are going
> to be slaughtered."

[37]No, in all these things we have complete victory through him who loved us! [38]For I am certain that nothing can separate us from his love: neither death nor life; neither angels nor other heavenly rulers or powers; neither the present nor the future; [39]neither the world



Nothing can separate us from his love

above nor the world below—there is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord.

God and His Chosen People

9 What I say is true; I belong to Christ and I do not lie. My conscience, ruled by the Holy Spirit, also assures me that I am not lying. [2]How great is my sorrow, how endless the pain in my heart for my people, my own flesh and blood! [3]For their sake I could wish that I myself were under God's curse and separated from Christ. [4]They are God's chosen people; he made them his sons and shared his glory with them; he made his covenants with them and gave them the Law; they have the true worship; they have received God's promises; [5]they are descended from the patriarchs, and Christ, as a human being, belongs to their race. May God, who rules over all, be praised forever! Amen.

6I am not saying that the promise of God has failed;
because not all the people of Israel are the chosen people
of God. 7Neither are all Abraham's descendants the
children of God. God said to Abraham, "The descend-
ants of Isaac will be counted as yours." 8This means
that the children born in the natural way are not the
children of God; instead, the children born as a result of
God's promise are regarded as the true descendants.
9For God's promise was made in these words: "At the
right time I will come back and Sarah will have a
son."
10And this is not all. For Rebecca's two sons had the
same father, our ancestor Isaac. 11-12But in order that
the choice of one son might be completely the result
of God's own purpose, God said to her, "The older
will serve the younger." He said this before they were
born, before they had done anything either good or
bad; so God's choice was based on his call, and not on
anything they did. 13As the scripture says, "I loved
Jacob, but I hated Esau."
14What shall we say, then? That God is unjust? Not
at all. 15For he said to Moses, "I will have mercy on
whom I wish, I will take pity on whom I wish." 16So
then, it does not depend on what man wants or does,
but only on God's mercy. 17For the scripture says to
Pharaoh, "I made you king for this very purpose, to
use you to show my power, and to make my name
known in all the world." 18So then, God has mercy on
whom he wishes, and he makes stubborn whom he
wishes.

God's Wrath and Mercy

19One of you, then, will say to me, "If this is so, how
can God find fault with a man? Who can resist God's
will?" 20But who are you, my friend, to talk back to
God? A clay pot does not ask the man who made it,
"Why did you make me like this?" 21After all, the man
who makes the pots has the right to use the clay as he
wishes, and to make two pots from the same lump of
clay, one for special occasions, and the other for ordi-
nary use.
22And the same is true of what God has done. He
wanted to show his wrath and to make his power known.

So he was very patient in enduring those who were the objects of his wrath, who were ready to be destroyed. [23]And he wanted also to reveal his rich glory, which was poured out on us who are the objects of his mercy, those of us whom he has prepared to receive his glory. [24]For we are the ones whom he called, not only from among the Jews but also from among the Gentiles. [25]This is what he says in the book of Hosea,

"The people who were not mine,
I will call 'My People.'
The nation that I did not love,
I will call 'My Beloved.'
[26] And in the very place where they were
told, 'You are not my people,'
there they will be called the sons of the
living God."

[27]And Isaiah exclaims about Israel, "Even if the people of Israel are as many as the grains of sand by the sea, yet only a few of them will be saved; [28]for the Lord will quickly settle his full account with all the world." [29]It is as Isaiah had said before, "If the Lord Almighty had not left us some descendants, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah."

Israel and the Gospel

[30]What shall we say, then? This: that the Gentiles, who were not trying to put themselves right with God, were put right with him through faith; [31]while the chosen people, who were seeking a law that would put them right with God, did not find it. [32]And why not? Because what they did was not based on faith but on works. They stumbled over the "stumbling stone" [33]that the scripture speaks of:

"Look, I place in Zion a stone
that will make people stumble,
a rock that will make them fall.
But whoever believes in him will not be
disappointed."

10 My brothers, how I wish with all my heart that my own people might be saved! How I pray to God for them! [2]I can be a witness for them that they are deeply devoted to God. But their devotion is not based on true knowledge. [3]They have not known the way in which God puts men right with himself, and have tried

to set up their own way; and so they did not submit themselves to God's way of putting men right. [4]For Christ has brought the Law to an end, so that everyone who believes is put right with God.

Salvation Is for All

[5]This is what Moses wrote about being put right with God by obeying the Law: "Whoever does what the Law commands will live by it." [6]But this is what is said about being put right with God through faith: "Do not say to yourself, Who will go up into heaven?" (that is, to bring Christ down). [7]"Do not say either, Who will go down into the world below?" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). [8]What it says is this: "God's message is near you, on your lips and in your heart"—that is, the message of faith that we preach. [9]If you declare with your lips, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. [10]For we believe in our hearts and are put right with God; we declare with our lips and are saved. [11]The scripture says, "Whoever believes in him will not be disappointed." [12]This includes everyone, because there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles; God is the same Lord of all, and richly blesses all who call to him. [13]As the scripture says, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

[14]But how can they call to him, if they have not believed? And how can they believe, if they have not heard the message? And how can they hear, if the message is not proclaimed? [15]And how can the message be proclaimed, if the messengers are not sent out? As the scripture says, "How wonderful is the coming of those who bring good news!" [16]But they have not all accepted the Good News. Isaiah himself said, "Lord, who believed our message?" [17]So then, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message comes through preaching Christ.

[18]But I ask: Is it true that they did not hear the message? Of course they did—as the scripture says:

> "The sound of their voices went out to
> all the world;
> their words reached the ends of the
> earth."

19 Again I ask: Did the people of Israel not know? Moses
himself is the first one to answer:
"I will make you jealous of a people who
are not a real nation;
I will make you angry with a nation of
foolish people."
20 And Isaiah is bolder when he says,
"I was found by those who were not
looking for me,
I appeared to those who were not
asking for me."
21 But concerning Israel he says, "I held out my hands
the whole day long to a disobedient and rebellious peo-
ple."

God's Mercy on Israel

11 I ask, then: Did God reject his own people? Cer-
tainly not! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant
of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God
has not rejected his people, whom he chose from the
beginning. You know what the scripture says in the
passage where Elijah pleads with God against Israel:
3 "Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down
your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying
to kill me." 4 What answer did God give him? "I have
kept for myself seven thousand men who have not wor-
shiped the false god Baal." 5 It is the same way now at
this time: there is a small number of those whom God
has chosen, because of his mercy. 6 His choice is based
on his mercy, not on what they have done. For if God's
choice were based on what men do, then his mercy
would not be true mercy.

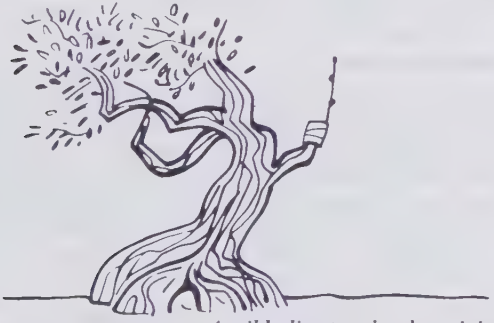
7 What then? The people of Israel did not find what
they were looking for. It was the small group that God
chose who found it; the rest grew deaf to God's call. 8 As
the scripture says, "God made them dull of heart and
mind; to this very day they cannot see with their eyes
or hear with their ears." 9 And David says,
"May they be caught and trapped at
their feasts;
may they fall, may they be punished!
10 May their eyes be closed so that they
cannot see;

and make them bend under their
troubles at all times."

[11]I ask, then: When the Jews stumbled, did they fall to their ruin? By no means! Because they sinned, salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make the Jews jealous of them. [12]The sin of the Jews brought rich blessings to the world, and their spiritual poverty brought rich blessings to the Gentiles. How much greater the blessings will be, then, when the complete number of Jews is included!

The Salvation of the Gentiles

[13]I am speaking now to you Gentiles: as long as I am an apostle to the Gentiles I will take pride in my work. [14]Perhaps I can make the people of my own race jealous, and so be able to save some of them. [15]For when they were rejected, the world was made friends with God. What will it be, then, when they are accepted? It will be life for the dead!



A wild olive tree has been joined to it

[16]If the first piece of bread is given to God, then the whole loaf is his also; and if the roots of a tree are offered to God, the branches are his also. [17]Some of the branches of the cultivated olive tree have been broken off, and the branch of a wild olive tree has been joined to it. You Gentiles are like that wild olive tree, and now you share the strength and rich life of the Jews. [18]So then, you must not despise those who were broken off

like branches. How can you be proud? You are just a branch; you don't support the root—the root supports you.

[19]But you will say, "Yes, but the branches were broken off to make room for me." [20]This is true. They were broken off because they did not believe, while you remain in place because you believe. But do not have proud thoughts about it; instead, be afraid. [21]God did not spare the Jews, who are like natural branches; do you think he will spare you? [22]Here we see how kind and how severe God is. He is severe toward those who have fallen, but kind to you—if you continue in his kindness; but if you do not, you too will be broken off. [23]And the Jews, if they abandon their unbelief, will be put back in the place where they were, because God is able to put them back again. [24]You Gentiles are like the branch of a wild olive tree that is broken off, and then, contrary to nature, is joined to the cultivated olive tree. The Jews are like this cultivated tree; and it will be much easier, then, for God to join these broken-off branches back to their own tree.

God's Mercy on All

[25]There is a secret truth, my brothers, which I want you to know. It will keep you from thinking how wise you are. It is this: the stubbornness of the people of Israel is not permanent, but will last only until the complete number of Gentiles comes to God. [26]And this is how all Israel will be saved. As the scripture says,

"The Savior will come from Zion,
and remove all wickedness from the descendants of Jacob.
[27] I will make this covenant with them,
when I take away their sins."

[28]Because they reject the Good News, the Jews are God's enemies for the sake of you, the Gentiles. But because of God's choice, they are his friends for the sake of the patriarchs. [29]For God does not change his mind about whom he chooses and blesses. [30]As for you Gentiles, you disobeyed God in the past; but now you have received God's mercy because the Jews disobeyed. [31]In the same way, because of the mercy that you have re-

ceived, the Jews now disobey God, in order that they also may now receive God's mercy. [32]For God has made all men prisoners of disobedience, that he might show mercy to them all.

Praise to God

[33]How great are God's riches! How deep are his wisdom and knowledge! Who can explain his decisions? Who can understand his ways? [34]As the scripture says,

"Who knows the mind of the Lord?
Who is able to give him advice?
[35] Who has ever given him anything,
so that he had to pay it back?"

[36]For all things were created by him, and all things exist through him and for him. To God be the glory forever! Amen.

Life in God's Service

12 So then, my brothers, because of God's great mercy to us, I make this appeal to you: Offer yourselves as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his service and pleasing to him. This is the true worship that you should offer. [2]Do not conform outwardly to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of God—what is good, and is pleasing to him, and is perfect.

[3]And because of God's gracious gift to me, I say to all of you: Do not think of yourselves more highly than you should. Instead, be modest in your thinking, and each one of you judge himself according to the amount of faith that God has given him. [4]We have many parts in the one body, and all these parts have different functions. [5]In the same way, though we are many, we are one body in union with Christ and we are all joined to each other as different parts of one body. [6]So we are to use our different gifts in accordance with the grace that God has given us. If our gift is to speak God's message, we must do it according to the faith that we have. [7]If it is to serve, we must serve. If it is to teach, we must teach. [8]If it is to encourage others, we must do so. Whoever shares with others what he has, must do it generously;

whoever has authority, must work hard; whoever shows kindness to others, must do it cheerfully.

[9]Love must be completely sincere. Hate what is evil, hold on to what is good. [10]Love one another warmly as brothers in Christ, and be eager to show respect for one another. [11]Work hard, and do not be lazy. Serve the Lord with a heart full of devotion. [12]Let your hope keep you joyful, be patient in your troubles, and pray at all times. [13]Share your belongings with your needy brothers, and open your homes to strangers.

[14]Ask God to bless those who persecute you; yes, ask him to bless, not to curse. [15]Be happy with those who are happy, weep with those who weep. [16]Have the same concern for all alike. Do not be proud, but accept humble duties. Do not think of yourselves as wise.

Never take revenge

[17]If someone does evil to you, do not pay him back with evil. Try to do what all men consider to be good. [18]Do everything possible, on your part, to live at peace with all men. [19]Never take revenge, my friends, but instead let God's wrath do it. For the scripture says, "I will take revenge, I will pay back, says the Lord." [20]Instead, as the scripture says: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on his head." [21]Do not let evil defeat you; instead, conquer evil with good

Duties toward the State Authorities

13 Everyone must obey the state authorities, because no authority exists without God's permission, and the existing authorities have been put there by God. [2]Whoever opposes the existing authority opposes what God has ordered; and anyone who does so will bring judgment on himself. [3]For rulers are not to be feared by those who do good but by those who do evil. Would you like to be unafraid of the man in authority? Then do what is good, and he will praise you. [4]For he is God's servant working for your own good. But if you do evil, be afraid of him, because his power to punish is real. He is God's servant and carries out God's wrath on those who do evil. [5]For this reason you must obey the authorities—not just because of God's wrath, but also as a matter of conscience.

[6]This is also the reason that you pay taxes, because the authorities are working for God when they fulfill their duties. [7]Pay, then, what you owe them; pay them your personal and property taxes, and show respect and honor for them all.

Duties toward One Another

[8]Be in debt to no one—the only debt you should have is to love one another. Whoever loves his fellow-man has obeyed the Law. [9]The commandments, "Do not commit adultery; do not murder; do not steal; do not covet"—all these, and any others besides, are summed up in the one command, "Love your fellow-man as yourself." [10]Whoever loves his fellow-man will never do him wrong. To love, then, is to obey the whole Law.

[11]You must do this, because you know what hour it is: the time has come for you to wake up from your sleep. For the moment when we will be saved is closer now than it was when we first believed. [12]The night is nearly over, day is almost here. Let us stop doing the things that belong to the dark, and take up the weapons for fighting in the light. [13]Let us conduct ourselves properly, as people who live in the light of day; no orgies or drunkenness, no immorality or indecency, no fighting or jealousy. [14]But take up the weapons of the Lord Jesus

Christ, and stop giving attention to your sinful nature, to satisfy its desires.

Do Not Judge Your Brother

14 Accept among you the man who is weak in the faith, but do not argue with him about his personal opinions. [2]One man's faith allows him to eat anything, but the man who is weak in the faith eats only vegetables. [3]The man who will eat anything is not to despise the man who doesn't; while the one who eats only vegetables is not to pass judgment on the one who eats anything, because God has accepted him. [4]Who are you to judge the servant of someone else? It is his own Master who will decide whether he succeeds or fails. And he will succeed, because the Lord is able to make him succeed.

[5]One man thinks that a certain day is more important than the others, while another man thinks that all days are the same. Each one should have his own mind firmly made up. [6]Whoever thinks highly of a certain day does it in honor of the Lord; whoever eats anything does it in honor of the Lord, because he gives thanks to God for the food. Whoever refuses to eat certain things does so in honor of the Lord, and he gives thanks to God. [7]None of us lives for himself only, none of us dies for himself only; [8]if we live, it is for the Lord that we live, and if we die, it is for the Lord that we die. Whether we live or die, then, we belong to the Lord. [9]For Christ died and rose to life in order to be the Lord of the living and of the dead. [10]You, then—why do you pass judgment on your brother? And you—why do you despise your brother? All of us will stand before God, to be judged by him. [11]For the scripture says,

> "As I live, says the Lord,
> everyone will kneel before me,
> and everyone will confess that I am
> God."

[12]Every one of us, then, will have to give an account of himself to God.

Do Not Make Your Brother Fall

[13]So then, let us stop judging one another. Instead,

this is what you should decide: not to do anything that would make your brother stumble, or fall into sin. [14]My union with the Lord Jesus makes me know for certain that nothing is unclean of itself; but if a man believes that something is unclean, then it becomes unclean for him. [15]If you hurt your brother because of something you eat, then you are no longer acting from love. Do not let the food that you eat ruin the man for whom Christ died! [16]Do not let what you regard as good acquire a bad name. [17]For God's Kingdom is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of the righteousness, peace, and joy that the Holy Spirit gives. [18]And whoever serves Christ in this way wins God's pleasure and man's approval.

[19]So then, we must always aim at those things that bring peace, and that help strengthen one another. [20]Do not, because of food, destroy what God has done. All foods may be eaten, but it is wrong to eat anything that will cause someone else to fall into sin. [21]The right thing to do is to keep from eating meat, drinking wine, or doing anything else that will make your brother fall. [22]Keep what you believe about this matter, then, between yourself and God. Happy is the man who does not feel himself condemned when he does what he approves of! [23]But if he has doubts about what he eats, God condemns him when he eats it, because his action is not based on faith. And anything that is not based on faith is sin.

Help the weak

Please Others, Not Yourselves

15 We who are strong in the faith ought to help the weak to carry their burdens. We should not please ourselves. [2]Instead, each of us should please his brother for his own good, in order to build him up in the

faith. 3For Christ did not please himself. Instead, as the scripture says, "The insults spoken by those who insulted you have fallen on me." 4Everything written in the Scriptures was written to teach us, in order that we might have hope through the patience and encouragement the Scriptures give us. 5And may God, the source of patience and encouragement, enable you to have the same point of view among yourselves by following the example of Christ Jesus, 6so that all of you together, with one voice, may praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Gospel to the Gentiles

7Accept one another, then, for the glory of God, as Christ has accepted you. 8Because I tell you that Christ became a servant of the Jews to show that God is faithful, to make God's promises to the patriarchs come true, 9and also to enable the Gentiles to praise God for his mercy. As the scripture says,

"And so I will give thanks to you among
the Gentiles,
I will sing praises to your name."

10Again it says,

"Rejoice, Gentiles, with God's chosen
people!"

11And again,

"Praise the Lord, all Gentiles;
praise him, all peoples!"

12And again, Isaiah says,

"A descendant of Jesse will come;
he will be raised to rule the Gentiles,
and they will put their hope in him."

13May God, the source of hope, fill you with all joy and peace by means of your faith in him, so that your hope will continue to grow by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Paul's Reason for Writing So Boldly

14My brothers: I myself feel sure that you are full of goodness, that you are filled with all knowledge and are able to teach one another. 15But in this letter I have been quite bold about certain subjects of which I have re-

minded you. I have been bold because of the privilege
God has given me [16]of being a servant of Christ Jesus
to work for the Gentiles. I serve like a priest in preach-
ing the Good News from God, in order that the Gentiles
may be an offering acceptable to God, dedicated to him
by the Holy Spirit. [17]In union with Christ Jesus, then, I
can be proud of my service for God. [18]I will be bold and
speak only of what Christ has done through me to lead
the Gentiles to obey God, by means of words and deeds,
[19]by the power of signs and miracles, and by the power
of the Spirit. And so, in traveling all the way from
Jerusalem to Illyricum, I have proclaimed fully the
Good News about Christ. [20]My ambition has always
been to proclaim the Good News in places where Christ
has not been heard of, so as not to build on the founda-
tion laid by someone else. [21]As the scripture says,

"Those who were not told about him will
see,
and those who have not heard will un-
derstand."

Paul's Plan to Visit Rome

[22]For this reason I have been prevented many times
from coming to you. [23]But now that I have finished my
work in these regions, and since I have been wanting for
so many years to come to see you, [24]I hope to do so now.
I would like to see you on my way to Spain, and be
helped by you to go there, after I have enjoyed visiting
you for a while. [25]Right now, however, I am going to
Jerusalem in the service of God's people there. [26]For the
churches in Macedonia and Greece have freely decided
to give an offering to help the poor among God's people
in Jerusalem. [27]They themselves decided to do it. But,
as a matter of fact, they have an obligation to help those
poor; the Jews shared their spiritual blessings with the
Gentiles, and so the Gentiles ought to serve the Jews
with their material blessings. [28]When I have finished this
task, and have turned over to them the full amount of
money that has been raised for them, I shall leave for
Spain and visit you on my way there. [29]When I come to
you, I know that I shall come with a full measure of the
blessing of Christ.

[30]I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and

by the love that the Spirit gives: join me in praying fervently to God for me. [31]Pray that I may be kept safe from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service in Jerusalem may be acceptable to God's people there. [32]And so I will come to you full of joy, if it is God's will, and enjoy a refreshing visit with you. [33]May God, our source of peace, be with all of you. Amen.

Personal Greetings

16 I recommend to you our sister Phoebe, who serves the church at Cenchreae. [2]Receive her in the Lord's name, as God's people should, and give her any help she may need from you; for she herself has been a good friend to many people and also to me.

[3]I send greetings to Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in the service of Christ Jesus, [4]who risked their lives for me. I am grateful to them not only I, but all the Gentile churches as well. [5]Greetings also to the church that meets in their house.

Greetings to my dear friend Epaenetus, who was the first man in the province of Asia to believe in Christ. [6]Greetings to Mary, who has worked so hard for you. [7]Greetings to Andronicus and Junias, fellow Jews who were in prison with me; they are well known among the apostles, and they became Christians before I did.

[8]My greetings to Ampliatus, my dear friend in the fellowship of the Lord. [9]Greetings to Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ's service, and to Stachys, my dear friend. [10]Greetings to Apelles, whose loyalty to Christ has been proved. Greetings to those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. [11]Greetings to Herodion, a fellow Jew, and to the Christian brothers in the family of Narcissus.

[12]My greetings to Tryphaena and Tryphosa, who work in the Lord's service, and to my dear friend Persis, who has done so much work for the Lord. [13]I send greetings to Rufus, that outstanding worker in the Lord's service, and to his mother, who has always treated me like a son. [14]My greetings to Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and all the other Christian brothers with them. [15]Greetings to Philologus and Julia, to Nereus and his sister, to Olympas and to all of God's people who are with them.

[16]Greet one another with a brotherly kiss. All the churches of Christ send you their greetings.

Final Instructions

[17]I urge you, my brothers: watch out for those who cause divisions and upset people's faith, who go against the teaching which you have received; keep away from them. [18]For those who do such things are not serving Christ our Lord, but their own appetites. By their fine words and flattering speech they deceive the minds of innocent people. [19]Everyone has heard of your loyalty to the gospel, and for this reason I am happy about you. I want you to be wise about what is good, but innocent in what is evil. [20]And God, our source of peace, will soon crush Satan under your feet.

The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

[21]Timothy, my fellow worker, sends you his greetings; and so do Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, fellow Jews.

[22]I, Tertius, the writer of this letter, send you Christian greetings.

[23]My host Gaius, in whose house the church meets, sends you his greetings; Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, send you their greetings.

[[24]The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.]

Concluding Prayer of Praise

[25]Let us give glory to God! He is able to make you stand firm in your faith, according to the Good News I preach, the message about Jesus Christ, and according to the revelation of the secret truth which was hidden for long ages in the past. [26]Now, however, that truth has been brought out into the open through the writings of the prophets; and by the command of the eternal God it is made known to all nations, so that all may believe and obey.

[27]To the only God, who alone is all-wise, be the glory through Jesus Christ forever! Amen.

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

1 From Paul, who by the will of God was called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and from our brother Sosthenes—

2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to all who are called to be God's holy people, who belong to him in union with Christ Jesus, together with all people everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:

3 May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Blessings in Christ

4 I always give thanks to my God for you, because of the grace he has given you through Christ Jesus. 5 For in union with Christ you have become rich in all things, including all speech and all knowledge. 6 The message about Christ has become so firmly fixed in you, 7 that you have not failed to receive a single blessing, as you wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. 8 He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be found without fault in the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is to be trusted, the God who called you to have fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Divisions in the Church

10 I appeal to you, brothers, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ: agree, all of you, in what you say, so that there will be no divisions among you. Be completely united, with only one thought and one purpose. 11 For some people from Chloe's family have told me quite plainly, my brothers, that there are quarrels among you. 12 Let me put it this way: each one of you says something different. One says, "I am with Paul"; another, "I am with Apollos"; another, "I am with Peter"; and another, "I am with Christ." 13 Christ has been divided into groups! Was it Paul who died on the cross for you? Were you baptized as Paul's disciples?

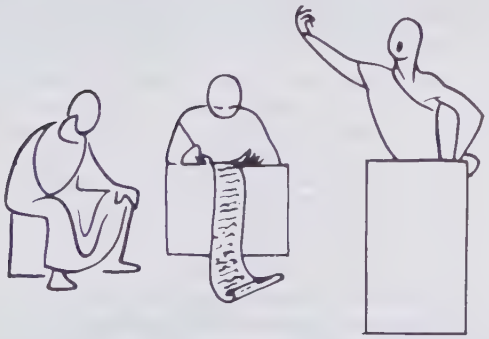
14 I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except

Crispus and Gaius. [15]No one can say, then, that you were baptized as my disciples. [16](Oh yes, I also baptized Stephanas and his family; but I can't remember whether I baptized anyone else.) [17]Christ did not send me to baptize. He sent me to tell the Good News, and to tell it without using the language of men's wisdom, to keep Christ's death on the cross from being robbed of its power.

Christ the Power and the Wisdom of God

[18]For the message about Christ's death on the cross is nonsense to those who are being lost; but for us who are being saved, it is God's power. [19]The scripture says,

> "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
> and set aside the understanding of the
> scholars."



This world's wisdom is foolishness!

[20]So then, where does that leave the wise men? Or the scholars? Or the skillful debaters of this world? God has shown that this world's wisdom is foolishness!

[21]For God, in his wisdom, made it impossible for men to know him by means of their own wisdom. Instead, God decided to save those who believe, by means of the "foolish" message we preach. [22]Jews want miracles for proof, and Greeks look for wisdom. [23]As for us, we proclaim Christ on the cross, a message that is offensive to the Jews and nonsense to the Gentiles; [24]but for those

whom God has called, both Jews and Gentiles, this message is Christ, who is the power of God and the wisdom of God. [25]For what seems to be God's foolishness is wiser than men's wisdom, and what seems to be God's weakness is stronger than men's strength.

[26]Now remember what you were, brothers, when God called you. Few of you were wise, or powerful, or of high social standing, from the human point of view. [27]God purposely chose what the world considers nonsense in order to put wise men to shame, and what the world considers weak in order to put powerful men to shame. [28]He chose what the world looks down on, and despises, and thinks is nothing, in order to destroy what the world thinks is important. [29]This means that no one can boast in God's presence. [30]But God has brought you into union with Christ Jesus, and God has made Christ to be our wisdom; by him we are put right with God, we become God's holy people, and are set free. [31]So then, as the scripture says, "Whoever wants to boast must boast of what the Lord has done."

The wisdom I speak

The Message about Christ on the Cross

2 When I came to you, my brothers, to preach God's secret truth to you, I did not use long words and great learning. 2For I made up my mind to forget everything while I was with you except Jesus Christ, and especially his death on the cross. 3So when I came to you I was weak and trembled all over with fear, 4and my teaching and message were not delivered with skillful words of human wisdom, but with convincing proof of the power of God's Spirit. 5Your faith, then, does not rest on man's wisdom, but on God's power.

God's Wisdom

6Yet I do speak wisdom to those who are spiritually mature. But it is not the wisdom that belongs to this world, or to the powers that rule this world—powers that are losing their power. 7The wisdom I speak is God's secret wisdom, hidden from men, which God had already chosen for our glory even before the world was made. 8None of the rulers of this world knew this wisdom. If they had known it, they would not have nailed the Lord of glory to the cross. 9However, as the scripture says,

> "What no man ever saw or heard,
> what no man ever thought could happen,
> is the very thing God prepared for those who love him."

10But it was to us that God made known his secret, by means of his Spirit. The Spirit searches everything, even the hidden depths of God's purposes. 11As for a man, it is his own spirit within him that knows all about him; in the same way, only God's Spirit knows all about God. 12We have not received this world's spirit; we have received the Spirit sent by God, so that we may know all that God has given us.

13So then, we do not speak in words taught by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Spirit, as we explain spiritual truths to those who have the Spirit. 14But the man who does not have the Spirit cannot receive the gifts that come from God's Spirit. He really does not understand them; they are nonsense to him, because

their value can be judged only on a spiritual basis. [15]The man who has the Spirit is able to judge the value of everything, but no one is able to judge him. [16]As the scripture says,

"Who knows the mind of the Lord?
Who is able to give him advice?"

We, however, have the mind of Christ.

Servants of God

3 As a matter of fact, brothers, I could not talk to you as I talk to men who have the Spirit; I had to talk to you as men of this world, as children in the Christian faith. [2]I had to feed you milk, not solid food, because you were not ready for it. And even now you are not ready for it, [3]because you still live as men of this world. When there is jealousy among you, and you quarrel with one another, doesn't this prove that you are men of this world, living by this world's standards? [4]When one of you says, "I am with Paul," and another, "I am with Apollos"—aren't you acting like worldly men?

[5]After all, who is Apollos? And who is Paul? We are simply God's servants, by whom you were led to believe. Each one of us does the work the Lord gave him to do: [6]I planted the seed, Apollos watered the plant, but it was God who made the plant grow. [7]The one who

He makes the plant grow

plants and the one who waters really do not matter. It is God who matters, because he makes the plant grow. [8]There is no difference between the man who plants and the man who waters; God will reward each one according to the work he has done. [9]For we are partners working together for God, and you are God's field.

You are also God's building. [10]Using the gift that God gave me, I did the work of an expert builder and laid the foundation, and another man is building on it. But each one must be careful how he builds. [11]For God has already placed Jesus Christ as the one and only foundation, and no other foundation can be laid. [12]Some will use gold, or silver, or precious stones in building on the foundation; others will use wood, or grass, or straw. [13]And the quality of each man's work will be seen when the Day of Christ exposes it. For that Day's fire will reveal every man's work; the fire will test it and show its real quality. [14]If what a man built on the foundation survives the fire, he will receive a reward. [15]But if any man's work is burnt up, then he will lose it; but he himself will be saved, as if he had escaped through the fire.

[16]Surely you know that you are God's temple, and that God's Spirit lives in you! [17]So if anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you yourselves are his temple.

[18]No one should fool himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is a wise man by this world's standards, he should become a fool, in order to be really wise. [19]For what this world considers to be wisdom is nonsense in God's sight. As the scripture says, "God traps the wise men in their cleverness"; [20]and another scripture says, "The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are worthless." [21]No one, then, should boast about what men can do. Actually everything belongs to you: [22]Paul, Apollos, and Peter; this world, life, and death, the present and the future; all of these are yours, [23]and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

Apostles of Christ

4 You should look on us as Christ's servants who have been put in charge of God's secret truths. [2]The

one thing required of the man in charge is that he be faithful to his master. 3Now, I am not at all concerned about being judged by you, or by any human standard; I don't even pass judgment on myself. 4My conscience is clear, but that does not prove that I am really innocent. The Lord is the one who passes judgment on me. 5So you should not pass judgment on anyone before the right time comes. Final judgment must wait until the Lord comes; he will bring to light the dark secrets and expose the hidden purposes of men's hearts. And then every man will receive from God the praise he deserves.

6For your sake, brothers, I have applied all this to Apollos and me. I have used us as an example, so that you may learn what the saying means, "Observe the proper rules." None of you should be proud of one man and despise the other. 7Who made you superior to the others? Didn't God give you everything you have? Well, then, how can you brag, as if what you have were not a gift?

8Already you have everything you need! Already you are rich! You have become kings, even though we are not ! Well, I wish you really were kings, so that we could be kings together with you. 9For it seems to me that God has given us apostles the very last place, like men condemned to die in public, as a spectacle for the whole world of angels and of men. 10For Christ's sake we are fools; but you are wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! We are despised, but you are honored! 11To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty; we are clothed in rags; we are beaten; we wander from place to place; 12we work hard to support ourselves. When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure; 13when we are insulted, we answer back with kind words. We are no more than this world's garbage; we are the scum of the earth to this very hour!

14I write this to you, not because I want to make you feel ashamed; I do it to instruct you as my own dear children. 15For even if you have ten thousand guardians in your life in Christ, you have only one father. For in your life in Christ Jesus I have become your father, by bringing the Good News to you. 16I beg you,

then, follow my example. [17]For this purpose I am sending Timothy to you. He is my own dear and faithful son in the Lord. He will remind you of the principles which I follow in the new life in Christ Jesus, and which I teach in all the churches everywhere.

[18]Some of you have become proud, thinking that I would not be coming to visit you. [19]If the Lord is willing, however, I will come to you soon, and then I will find out for myself what these proud ones can do, and not just what they can say. [20]For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of words, but of power. [21]Which do you prefer? Shall I come to you with a whip, or with a heart of love and gentleness?

Immorality in the Church

5 Now, it is actually being said that there is sexual immorality among you so terrible that not even the heathen would be guilty of it. I am told that a man is living with his stepmother! [2]How then, can you be proud? On the contrary, you should be filled with sadness, and the man who has done such a thing should be put out of your group. [3]As for me, even though I am far away from you in body, still I am there with you in spirit; and in the name of our Lord Jesus I have already passed judgment on the man who has done this terrible thing, as though I were there with you. [4]As you meet together, and I meet with you in my spirit, by the power of our Lord Jesus present with us, [5]you are to hand this man over to Satan for his body to be destroyed, so that his spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord.

[6]It is not right for you to be proud! You know the saying, "A little bit of yeast makes the whole batch of dough rise." [7]You must take out this old yeast of sin so that you will be entirely pure. Then you will be like a new batch of dough without any yeast, as indeed I know you actually are. For our Passover feast is ready, now that Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. [8]Let us celebrate our feast, then, not with bread having the old yeast, the yeast of sin and wickedness, but with the bread that has no yeast, the bread of purity and truth.

[9]In the letter that I wrote you I told you not to associate with immoral people. [10]Now, I did not mean pagans who are immoral, or greedy, or thieves, or who

worship idols. To avoid them you would have to get out of the world completely. 11What I meant was that you should not associate with a man who calls himself a brother but is immoral, or greedy, or worships idols, or is a slanderer, or a drunkard, or a thief. Don't even sit down to eat with such a person.

12-13After all, it is none of my business to judge outsiders. God will judge them. But should you not judge the members of your own fellowship? As the scripture says, "Take the evil man out of your group."

Lawsuits against Brothers

6 If one of you has a dispute with a brother, how dare he go before heathen judges, instead of letting God's people settle the matter? 2Don't you know that God's people will judge the world? Well, then, if you are to judge the world, aren't you capable of judging small matters? 3Do you not know that we shall judge the angels? How much more, then, the things of this life! 4If, then, such matters come up, are you going to take them to be settled by people who have no standing in the church? 5Shame on you! Surely there is at least one wise man in your fellowship who can settle a dispute between the brothers. 6Instead, one brother goes to court against another, and lets unbelievers judge the case!

7The very fact that you have legal disputes among yourselves shows that you have failed completely. Would it not be better for you to be wronged? Would it not be better for you to be robbed? 8Instead, you yourselves wrong one another, and rob one another, even your very brothers! 9Surely you know that the wicked will not receive God's Kingdom. Do not fool yourselves; people who are immoral, or worship idols, or are adulterers, or homosexual perverts, 10or who rob, or are greedy, or are drunkards, or who slander others, or are thieves—none of these will receive God's Kingdom. 11Some of you were like that. But you have been cleansed from sin; you have been dedicated to God; you have been put right with God through the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Use Your Bodies for God's Glory

12Someone will say, "I am allowed to do anything."

Yes; but not everything is good for you. I could say, "I am allowed to do anything"; but I am not going to let anything make a slave of me. [13]Someone else will say, "Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food." Yes; but God will put an end to both. A man's body is not to be used for immoral purposes, but to serve the Lord; and the Lord serves the body. [14]God raised the Lord from death, and he will also raise us by his power.

[15]You know that your bodies are parts of the body of Christ. Shall I take a part of Christ's body and make it part of the body of a prostitute? Impossible! [16]Or perhaps you don't know that the man who joins his body to a prostitute becomes physically one with her? The scripture says quite plainly, "The two will become one body." [17]But he who joins himself to the Lord becomes spiritually one with him.

[18]Avoid immorality. Any other sin a man commits does not affect his body; but the man who commits immorality sins against his own body. [19]Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you, and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourselves but to God; [20]he bought you for a price. So use your bodies for God's glory.

Questions about Marriage

7 Now, to deal with the matters you wrote about. A man does well not to marry. [2]But because there is so much immorality, every man should have his own wife, and every woman should have her own husband. [3]A man should fulfill his duty as a husband and a woman should fulfill her duty as a wife, and each should satisfy the other's needs. [4]The wife is not the master of her own body, but the husband is; in the same way the husband is not the master of his own body, but the wife is. [5]Do not deny yourselves to each other, unless you first agree to do so for a while, in order to spend your time in prayer; but then resume normal marital relations, to keep you from giving in to Satan's temptation because of your lack of self-control.

[6]I tell you this not as an order, but simply as a permission. [7]Actually I would prefer that all were as I am; but

each one has the special gift that God has given him, one man this gift, another man that.

[8]Now, I say this to the unmarried and to the widows: it would be better for you to continue to live alone, as I do. [9]But if you cannot restrain your desires, go on and marry—it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

[10]For married people I have a command, not my own but the Lord's: a wife must not leave her husband; [11]if she does, she must remain single or else be reconciled to her husband; and a husband must not divorce his wife.

[12]To the others I say (I, myself, not the Lord): if a Christian man has a wife who is an unbeliever and she agrees to go on living with him, he must not divorce her. [13]And if a Christian woman is married to a man who is an unbeliever, and he agrees to go on living with her, she must not divorce him. [14]For the unbelieving husband is made acceptable to God by being united to his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made acceptable to God by being united to her Christian husband. If this were not so, their children would be like pagan children; but as it is, they are acceptable to God. [15]However, if the one who is not a believer wishes to leave the Christian partner, let it be so. In such cases the Christian partner, whether husband or wife, is free to act. God has called you to live in peace. [16]How can you be sure, Christian wife, that you will not save your husband? Or how can you be sure, Christian husband, that you will not save your wife?

Live as God Called You

[17]Each one should go on living according to the Lord's gift to him, and as he was when God called him. This is the rule I teach in all the churches. [18]If a circumcised man has accepted God's call, he should not try to remove the marks of circumcision; if an uncircumcised man has accepted God's call, he should not get circumcised. [19]Because being circumcised or not means nothing. What matters is to obey God's commandments. [20]Every man should remain as he was when he accepted God's call. [21]Were you a slave when God called you?

Well, never mind; but if you do have a chance to become a free man, use it. [22]For a slave who has been called by the Lord is the Lord's free man; in the same way a free man who has been called by Christ is his slave. [23]God bought you for a price; so do not become men's slaves. [24]Brothers, each one should remain in fellowship with God in the same condition he was when he was called.

Questions about the Unmarried and the Widows

[25]Now, the matter about the unmarried: I do not have a command from the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who by the Lord's mercy is worthy of trust.

[26]Considering the present distress, I think it is better for a man to stay as he is. [27]Do you have a wife? Then don't try to get rid of her. Are you unmarried? Then don't look for a wife. [28]But if you do marry, you haven't committed a sin; and if an unmarried woman marries, she hasn't committed a sin. But I would rather spare you the everyday troubles that such people will have.

[29]What I mean, brothers, is this: there is not much time left, and from now on married men should live as though they were not married; [30]those who weep, as though they were not sad; those who laugh, as though they were not happy; those who buy, as though they did not own what they bought; [31]those who deal in worldly goods, as though they were not fully occupied with them. For this world, as it is now, will not last much longer.

[32]I would like you to be free from worry. An unmarried man concerns himself with the Lord's work, because he is trying to please the Lord; [33]but a married man concerns himself with worldly matters, because he wants to please his wife, [34]and so he is pulled in two directions. An unmarried woman or a virgin concerns herself with the Lord's work, because she wants to be dedicated both in body and spirit; but a married woman concerns herself with worldly matters, because she wants to please her husband.

[35]I am saying this because I want to help you. I am not trying to put restrictions on you. Instead, I want you to do what is right and proper, and give yourselves completely to the Lord's service without any reservation.

36In the case of an engaged couple who have decided not to marry: if the man feels that he is not acting properly toward the girl; if his passions are too strong, and he feels that they ought to marry, then they should get married, as he wants to. There is no sin in this. 37But if a man, without being forced to do so, has firmly made up his mind not to marry; if he has his will under complete control, and has already decided in his own mind what to do—then he does well not to marry the girl. 38So the man who marries his girl does well, but the one who does not marry his girl will do even better.

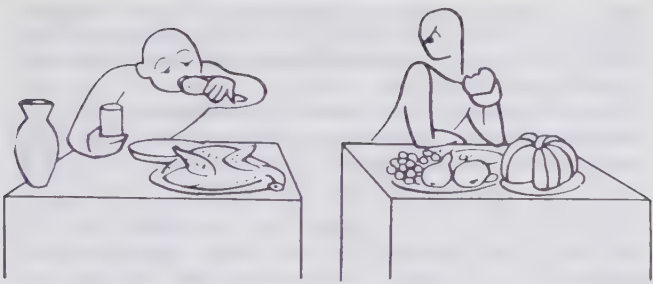
39A married woman is not free as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, then she is free to be married to the man she wants; but it must be a Christian marriage. 40She will be happier, however, if she stays as she is. That is my opinion, and I think that I too have God's Spirit.

The Question about Food Offered to Idols

8 Now, the matter about food offered to idols.
It is true, of course, that "all of us have knowledge," as they say. Such knowledge, however, puffs a man up with pride; but love builds up. 2The person who thinks he knows something really doesn't know as he ought to know. 3But the man who loves God is known by him.

4So then, about eating the food offered to idols: we know that an idol stands for something that does not really exist; we know that there is only the one God. 5Even if there are so-called "gods," whether in heaven or on earth, and even though there are many of these "gods" and "lords," 6yet there is for us only one God, the Father, who is the creator of all things, and for whom we live; and there is only one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things were created, and through whom we live.

7But not everyone knows this truth. Some people are so used to idols that to this very day when they eat such food they still think of it as food that belongs to an idol; their conscience is weak and they feel they are defiled by the food. 8Food, however, will not improve our rela-



They are defiled by the food

tion with God; we shall not lose anything if we do not eat, nor shall we gain anything if we do eat.

[9]Be careful, however, and do not let your freedom of action make those who are weak in the faith fall into sin. [10]Suppose a man whose conscience is weak in this matter sees you, who have "knowledge," eating in the temple of an idol; will not this encourage him to eat food offered to idols? [11]And so this weak man, your brother for whom Christ died, will perish because of your "knowledge"! [12]And in this way you will be sinning against Christ by sinning against your brothers and wounding their weak conscience. [13]So then, if food makes my brother sin, I will never eat meat again, so as not to make my brother fall into sin.

Rights and Duties of an Apostle

9 Am I not a free man? Am I not an apostle? Haven't I seen Jesus our Lord? And aren't you the result of my work for the Lord? [2]Even if others do not accept me as an apostle, surely you do! You yourselves, because of your life in the Lord, are proof of the fact that I am an apostle.

[3]When people criticize me, this is how I defend myself: [4]Don't I have the right to be given food and drink for my work? [5]Don't I have the right to do what the other apostles do, and the Lord's brothers, and Peter, and take a Christian wife with me on my trips? [6]Or are Barnabas and I the only ones who have to work for our

living? 7What soldier ever has to pay his own expenses in the army? What farmer does not eat the grapes from his own vineyard? What shepherd does not use the milk from his own sheep?

8I don't have to limit myself to these everyday examples, because the Law says the same thing. 9We read in the Law of Moses, "Do not tie up the mouth of the ox when it treads out the grain." Now, is God concerned about oxen? 10Or did he not really mean us when he said this? Of course this was written for us. The man who plows and the man who reaps should do their work in the hope of getting a share of the crop. 11We have sown spiritual seed among you. Is it too much if we reap material benefits from you? 12If others have the right to expect this from you, don't we have an even greater right?

But we haven't made use of this right. Instead, we have endured everything in order not to put any obstacle in the way of the Good News about Christ. 13Surely you know that the men who work in the temple get their food from the temple, and that those who offer the sacrifices on the altar get a share of the sacrifices. 14In the same way, the Lord has ordered that those who preach the gospel should get their living from it.

15But I haven't made use of any of these rights, nor am I writing this now in order to claim such rights for myself. I would rather die first! Nobody is going to turn my rightful boast into empty words! 16I have no right to boast just because I preach the gospel. After all, I am under orders to do so. And how terrible it would be for me if I did not preach the gospel! 17If I did my work as a matter of free choice, then I could expect to be paid; but since I do it as a matter of duty, it is because God has entrusted me with this task. 18What pay do I get, then? It is the privilege of preaching the Good News without charging for it, without claiming my rights in my work for the gospel.

19I am a free man, nobody's slave; but I make myself everybody's slave in order to win as many as possible. 20While working with the Jews, I live like a Jew in order to win them; and even though I myself am not subject to the Law of Moses, I live as though I were,

when working with those who are, in order to win them. [21]In the same way, when with Gentiles I live like a Gentile, outside the Jewish Law, in order to win Gentiles. This does not mean that I don't obey God's law; I am really under Christ's law. [22]Among the weak in faith I become weak like one of them, in order to win them. So I become all things to all men, that I may save some of them by any means possible.

Only one of them wins the prize

[23]All this I do for the gospel's sake, in order to share in its blessings. [24]Surely you know that in a race all the runners take part in it, but only one of them wins the prize. Run, then, in such a way as to win the prize. [25]Every athlete in training submits to strict discipline; he does so in order to be crowned with a wreath that will not last; but we do it for one that will last forever. [26]That is why I run straight for the finish line; that is why I am like a boxer, who does not waste his punches. [27]I harden my body with blows and bring it under complete control, to keep from being rejected myself after having called others to the contest.

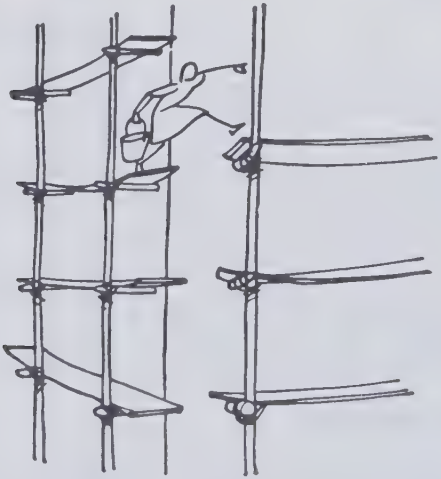
Warning against Idols

10 I want you to remember, brothers, what happened to our ancestors who followed Moses. They were all under the protection of the cloud, and all passed safely through the Red Sea. [2]In the cloud and in the sea they were all baptized as followers of Moses. [3]All ate the same spiritual bread, [4]and all drank the same

spiritual drink. They drank from that spiritual rock that went along with them; and that rock was Christ himself. 5But even then God was not pleased with most of them, and so their dead bodies were scattered over the desert.

6Now, all these things are examples for us, to warn us not to desire evil things, as they did, 7nor to worship idols, as some of them did. As the scripture says, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and got up to dance." 8We must not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did — and in one day twenty-three thousand of them fell dead. 9We must not put the Lord to the test, as some of them did — and they were killed by the snakes. 10You must not complain, as some of them did — and they were destroyed by the Angel of Death.

11All these things happened to them as examples for others, and they were written down as a warning for us. For we live at the time when the end is about to come.



Be careful that he does not fall

[12]Whoever thinks he is standing up had better be
careful that he does not fall. [13]Every temptation that
has come your way is the kind that normally comes to
people. But God keeps his promise, and he will not
allow you to be tempted beyond your power to resist;
at the time you are tempted he will give you the
strength to endure it, and so provide you with a way
out.

[14]So then, my dear friends, keep away from the wor-
ship of idols. [15]I speak to you as sensible people; judge
for yourselves what I say. [16]The cup of blessing for
which we give thanks to God: do we not share in the
blood of Christ when we drink from this cup? And the
bread we break: do we not share in the body of Christ
when we eat this bread? [17]Because there is the one
bread, all of us, though many, are one body, because
we all share the same loaf.

We all share the same loaf

[18]Consider the Hebrew people; those who eat what
is offered in sacrifice share in the altar's service to
God. [19]What do I mean? That an idol or the food
offered to it really amounts to anything? [20]No! What
I am saying is that what is sacrificed on pagan altars is
offered to demons, not to God. And I do not want you
to be partners with demons. [21]You cannot drink from

the Lord's cup and also from the cup of demons; you cannot eat at the Lord's table and also at the table of demons. [22]Or do we want to make the Lord jealous? Do we think that we are stronger than he?

[23]"We are allowed to do anything," so they say. Yes, but not everything is good. "We are allowed to do anything"—but not everything is helpful. [24]No one should be looking out for his own interests, but for the interests of others.

[25]You are free to eat anything sold in the meat market, without asking any questions because of conscience. [26]For, as the scripture says, "The earth and everything in it belong to the Lord."

[27]If an unbeliever invites you to a meal and you decide to go, eat what is set before you without asking any questions because of conscience. [28]But if someone tells you, "This is food that was offered to idols," then do not eat that food, for the sake of the one who told you so and for conscience' sake—[29]that is, not your own conscience, but the other man's conscience.

"Well, then," someone asks, "why should my freedom to act be limited by another person's conscience? [30]If I thank God for my food, why should anyone criticize me about food for which I give thanks?"

[31]Well, whatever you do, whether you eat or drink, do it all for God's glory. [32]Live in such a way as to cause no trouble either to Jews, or Gentiles, or to the church of God. [33]Just do as I do; I try to please everyone in all that I do, with no thought of my own good, but for the good of all, so that they might be saved.

11 Imitate me, then, just as I imitate Christ.

Covering the Head in Worship

[2]I praise you, because you always remember me and follow the teachings that I have handed on to you. [3]But I want you to understand that Christ is supreme over every man, the husband is supreme over his wife, and God is supreme over Christ. [4]So a man who prays or speaks God's message in public worship with his head covered disgraces Christ. [5]And any woman who prays or speaks God's message in public worship with nothing on her head disgraces her husband; there is no difference

between her and a woman whose head has been shaved.
6If the woman does not cover her head, she might as
well cut her hair. And since it is a shameful thing for a
woman to shave her head or cut her hair, she should
cover her head. 7A man has no need to cover his head,
because he reflects the image and glory of God. But
woman reflects the glory of man; 8for man was not
created from woman, but woman from man. 9Nor was
man created for woman's sake, but woman was created
for man's sake. 10On account of the angels, then, a
woman should have a covering over her head to show
that she is under her husband's authority. 11In our life
in the Lord, however, woman is not independent of
man, nor is man independent of woman. 12For as
woman was made from man, in the same way man is
born of woman; and all things come from God.
13Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to
pray to God in public worship with nothing on her
head? 14Why, nature itself teaches you that long hair is
a disgraceful thing for a man, 15but is a woman's pride.
Her long hair has been given her to serve as a cover-
ing. 16But if anyone wants to argue about it, all I have
to say is that neither we nor the churches of God have
any other custom in worship.

The Lord's Supper

17In the following instructions, however, I do not
praise you; because your church meetings actually do
more harm than good. 18In the first place, I have been
told that there are opposing groups in your church meet-
ings; and this I believe is partly true. 19(No doubt there
must be divisions among you so that the ones who are
in the right may be clearly seen.) 20When you meet
together as a group, you do not come to eat the Lord's
Supper. 21For as you eat, each one goes ahead with his
own meal, so that some are hungry while others get
drunk. 22Don't you have your own homes in which to
eat and drink? Or would you rather despise the church
of God and put to shame the people who are in need?
What do you expect me to say to you about this? Should
I praise you? Of course I do not praise you!
23For from the Lord I received the teaching that I
passed on to you: that the Lord Jesus, on the night he

was betrayed, took the bread, [24]gave thanks to God, broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in memory of me." [25]In the same way, he took the cup after the supper and said, "This cup is God's new covenant, sealed with my blood. Whenever you drink it, do it in memory of me." [26]For until the Lord comes, you proclaim his death whenever you eat this bread and drink from this cup.

[27]It follows, then, that if anyone eats the Lord's bread or drinks from his cup in a way that dishonors him, he is guilty of sin against the Lord's body and blood. [28]So then, everyone should examine himself first, and then eat the bread and drink from the cup. [29]For if he does not recognize the meaning of the Lord's body when he eats the bread and drinks from the cup, he brings judgment on himself as he eats and drinks. [30]That is why many of you are sick and weak, and several have died. [31]If we would examine ourselves first, we would not come under God's judgment. [32]But we are judged and punished by the Lord, so that we shall not be condemned together with the world.

[33]So then, my brothers, when you gather together to eat the Lord's meal, wait for one another. [34]And if anyone is hungry, he should eat at home, so that you will not come under God's judgment as you meet together. As for the other matters, I will settle them when I come.

Gifts from the Holy Spirit

12 Now, the matter about the gifts from the Holy Spirit.

I want you to know the truth about them, my brothers. [2]You know that while you were still heathen you were controlled by dead idols, who always led you astray. [3]You must realize, then, that no one who is led by God's Spirit can say, "A curse on Jesus!", and no one can confess "Jesus is Lord," unless he is guided by the Holy Spirit.

[4]There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them. [5]There are different ways of serving, but the same Lord is served. [6]There are different

abilities to perform service, but the same God gives ability to everyone for their service. 7The Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each one, for the good of all. 8The Spirit gives one man a message of wisdom, while to another man the same Spirit gives a message of knowledge. 9One and the same Spirit gives faith to one man, while to another man he gives the power to heal. 10The Spirit gives one man the power to work miracles; to another, the gift of speaking God's message; and to yet another, the ability to tell the difference between gifts that come from the Spirit and those that do not. To one man he gives the ability to speak in strange tongues, and to another he gives the ability to explain what is said. 11But it is one and the same Spirit who does all this; he gives a different gift to each man, as he wishes.

One Body with Many Parts

12Christ is like a single body, which has many parts; it is still one body, even though it is made up of different parts. 13In the same way, all of us, Jews and Gentiles, slaves and free men, have been baptized into the one body by the same Spirit, and we have all been given the one Spirit to drink.

14 For the body itself is not made up of only one part, but of many parts. 15If the foot were to say, "Because I am not a hand, I don't belong to the body," that would not make it stop being a part of the body. 16And if the ear were to say, "Because I am not an eye, I don't belong to the body," that would not make it stop being a part of the body. 17If the whole body were just an eye, how could it hear? And if it were only an ear, how could it smell? 18As it is, however, God put every different part in the body just as he wished. 19There would not be a body if it were all only one part! 20As it is, there are many parts, and one body.

21So then, the eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" Nor can the head say to the feet, "Well, I don't need you!" 22On the contrary, we cannot do without the parts of the body that seem to be weaker; 23and those parts that we think aren't worth very much are the ones which we treat with greater care; while the parts of the body which don't look very nice receive special

attention, [24]which the more beautiful parts of our body do not need. God himself has put the body together in such a way as to give greater honor to those parts that lack it. [25]And so there is no division in the body, but all its different parts have the same concern for one another. [26]If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it; if one part is praised, all the other parts share its happiness.

[27]All of you, then, are Christ's body, and each one is a part of it. [28]In the church, then, God has put all in place: in the first place, apostles, in the second place, prophets, and in the third place, teachers; then those who perform miracles, followed by those who are given the power to heal, or to help others, or to direct them, or to speak in strange tongues. [29]They are not all apostles, or prophets, or teachers. Not all have the power to work miracles, [30]or to heal diseases, or to speak in strange tongues, or to explain what is said. [31]Set your hearts, then, on the more important gifts.

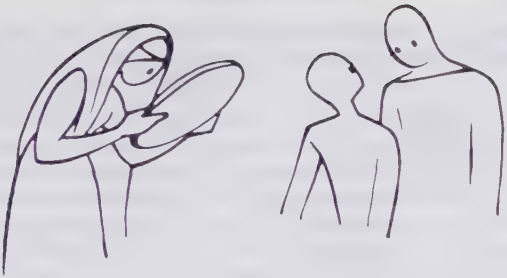
Best of all, however, is the following way.

Love

13 I may be able to speak the languages of men and even of angels, but if I have not love, my speech is no more than a noisy gong or a clanging bell. [2]I may have the gift of inspired preaching; I may have all knowledge and understand all secrets; I may have all the faith needed to move mountains—but if I have not love, I am nothing. [3]I may give away everything I have, and even give up my body to be burned—but if I have not love, it does me no good.

[4]Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous, or conceited, or proud; [5]love is not ill-mannered, or selfish, or irritable; love does not keep a record of wrongs; [6]love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth. [7]Love never gives up: its faith, hope, and patience never fail.

[8]Love is eternal. There are inspired messages, but they are temporary; there are gifts of speaking in strange tongues, but they will cease; there is knowledge, but it will pass. [9]For our gifts of knowledge and of inspired messages are only partial; [10]but when what is perfect comes, then what is partial will disappear.



Then we shall see face to face

[11]When I was a child, my speech, feelings, and thinking were all those of a child; now that I am a man, I have no more use for childish ways. [12]What we see now is like the dim image in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. What I know now is only partial; then it will be complete, as complete as God's knowledge of me.

[13]Meanwhile these three remain: faith, hope, and love; and the greatest of these is love.

More about Gifts from the Spirit

14 It is love, then, that you should strive for. Set your hearts on spiritual gifts, especially the gift of speaking God's message. [2]The one who speaks in strange tongues does not speak to men but to God, because no one understands him. He is speaking secret truths by the power of the Spirit. [3]But the one who speaks God's message speaks to men, and gives them help, encouragement, and comfort. [4]The man who speaks in strange tongues helps only himself, but the one who speaks God's message helps the whole church.

[5]I would like for all of you to speak in strange tongues; but I would rather that all of you had the gift of speaking God's message. For the man who speaks God's message is of greater value than the one who speaks in strange tongues—unless there is someone present who can explain what he says, so that the whole church may be helped. [6]So when I come to you, brothers, what use will I be to you if I speak in strange tongues? Not a bit, unless

I bring you some revelation from God, or some knowledge, or some inspired message, or some teaching.

7 Even such lifeless musical instruments as the flute
and the harp how will anyone know the tune that is
being played unless the notes are sounded distinctly?
8 And if the man who plays the bugle does not sound
a clear call, who will prepare for battle? 9 In the same
way, how will anyone understand what you are talking
about if your message by means of strange tongues is
not clear? Your words will vanish in the air! 10 There
are many different languages in the world, yet none of
them is without meaning. 11 But if I do not know the
language being spoken, the man who uses it will be a
foreigner to me and I will be a foreigner to him.
12 Since you are eager to have the gifts of the Spirit,
above everything else you must try to make greater
use of those which help build up the church.

13 The man who speaks in strange tongues, then,
must pray for the gift to explain what he says. 14 For if
I pray in this way, my spirit prays indeed, but my mind
has no part in it. 15 What should I do, then? I will pray
with my spirit, but I will pray also with my mind; I will
sing with my spirit, but I will sing also with my mind.
16 When you give thanks to God in spirit only, how can
an ordinary man taking part in the meeting say
"Amen" to your prayer of thanksgiving? He has no
way of knowing what you are saying. 17 Even if your
prayer of thanks to God is quite good, the other man
is not helped at all.

18 I thank God that I speak in strange tongues much
more than any of you. 19 But in church worship I would
rather speak five words that can be understood, in or-
der to teach others, than speak thousands of words in
strange tongues.

20 Do not be like children in your thinking, brothers;
be children so far as evil is concerned, but be mature
in your thinking. 21 In the Scriptures it is written,

"By means of men of strange languages
I will speak to this people, says the
Lord.
I will speak through lips of foreigners,
but even then they will not listen to
me."

[22]So then, the gift of speaking in strange tongues is proof for unbelievers, not for believers, while the gift of speaking God's message is proof for believers, not for unbelievers.

[23]If, then, the whole church meets together and everyone starts speaking in strange tongues — if some ordinary people or unbelievers come in, won't they say that you are all crazy? [24]But if all speak God's message, when some unbeliever or ordinary person comes in he will be convinced of his sin by what he hears. He will be judged by all he hears, [25]his secret thoughts will be brought into the open, and he will bow down and worship God, confessing, "Truly God is here with you!"

Order in the Church

[26]What do I mean, my brothers? When you meet for worship, one man has a hymn, another a teaching, another a revelation from God, another a message in strange tongues, and still another the explanation of what is said. Everything must be of help to the church. [27]If someone is going to speak in strange tongues, two or three at the most should speak, one after the other, and someone else must explain what is being said. [28]But if no one is there who can explain, then the one who speaks in strange tongues must be quiet in the meeting, and speak only to himself and to God. [29]Two or three who are given God's message should speak, while the others judge what they say. [30]But if someone sitting in the meeting receives a message from God, the one who is speaking should stop. [31]All of you may speak God's message, one by one, so that all will learn and be encouraged. [32]The gift of speaking God's message should be under the speaker's control, [33]because God has not called us to be disorderly, but peaceful.

As in all the churches of God's people, [34]the women should keep quiet in the church meetings. They are not allowed to speak; as the Jewish Law says, they must not be in charge. [35]If they want to find out about something, they should ask their husbands at home. It is a disgraceful thing for a woman to speak in a church meeting.

[36]Or could it be that the word of God came from you?

Or are you the only ones to whom it came? [37]If anyone supposes he is God's messenger or has a spiritual gift, he must realize that what I am writing you is the Lord's command. [38]But if he does not pay attention to this, pay no attention to him.

[39]So then, my brothers, set your heart on speaking God's message, but do not forbid the speaking in strange tongues. [40]Everything must be done in a proper and orderly way.

The Resurrection of Christ

15 And now I want to remind you, brothers, of the Good News which I preached to you, which you received, and on which your faith stands firm. [2]That is the gospel, the message that I preached to you. You are saved by the gospel if you hold firmly to it—unless it was for nothing that you believed.

[3]I passed on to you what I received, which is of the greatest importance: that Christ died for our sins, as written in the Scriptures; [4]that he was buried, and was raised to life on the third day, as written in the Scriptures; [5]that he appeared to Peter, and then to all twelve apostles. [6]Then he appeared to more than five hundred of his followers at once, most of whom are still alive, although some have died. [7]Then he appeared to James, and then to all the apostles.

[8]Last of all he appeared also to me—even though I am like one who was born in a most unusual way. [9]For I am the least of all the apostles—I do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted God's church. [10]But by God's grace I am what I am, and the grace that he gave me was not without effect. On the contrary, I have worked harder than all the other apostles, although it was not really my own doing, but God's grace working with me. [11]So then, whether it came from me or from them, this is what we all preach, this is what you believe.

Our Resurrection

[12]Now, since our message is that Christ has been raised from death, how can some of you say that the

dead will not be raised to life? [13]If that is true, it means
that Christ was not raised; [14]and if Christ has not been
raised from death, then we have nothing to preach and
you have nothing to believe. [15]More than that, we are
shown to be lying against God, because we said of him
that he raised Christ from death—but he did not raise
him, if it is true that the dead are not raised to life. [16]For
if the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised.
[17]And if Christ has not been raised, then your faith is a
delusion and you are still lost in your sins. [18]It would
also mean that the believers in Christ who have died are
lost. [19]If our hope in Christ is good for this life only, and
no more, then we deserve more pity than anyone else in
all the world.

If the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised

[20]But the truth is that Christ has been raised from
death, as the guarantee that those who sleep in death
will also be raised. [21]For just as death came by means
of a man, in the same way the rising from death comes
by means of a man. [22]For just as all men die because
of their union to Adam, in the same way all will be
raised to life because of their union to Christ. [23]But
each one in his proper order: Christ, the first of all;
then those who belong to Christ, at the time of his
coming. [24]Then the end will come; Christ will over-
come all spiritual rulers, authorities, and powers, and
hand over the Kingdom to God the Father. [25]For

Christ must rule until God defeats all enemies and puts them under his feet. [26]The last enemy to be defeated will be death. [27]For the scripture says, "God put *all* things under his feet." It is clear, of course, that the words "all things" do not include God himself, who puts all things under Christ. [28]But when all things have been placed under Christ's rule, then he himself, the Son, will place himself under God, who placed all under him; and God will rule completely over all.

[29]Now, what of those people who are baptized for the dead? What do they hope to accomplish? If it is true, as they claim, that the dead are not raised to life, why are they being baptized for the dead? [30]And as for us —why would we run the risk of danger every hour? [31]Brothers, I face death every day! The pride I have in you in our life in Christ Jesus our Lord makes me declare this. [32]If, as it were, I have fought "wild beasts" here in Ephesus, simply from human motives, what have I gained? But if the dead are not raised to life, then "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we will die," as the saying goes.

[33]Do not be fooled. "Bad companions ruin good character." [34]Come back to your right senses and stop your sinful ways. I say this to your shame: some of you do not know God.

The Resurrection Body

[35]Someone will ask, "How can the dead be raised to life? What kind of body will they have?" [36]You fool! When you plant a seed in the ground it does not sprout to life unless it dies. [37]And what you plant in the ground is a bare seed, perhaps a grain of wheat, or of some other kind, not the full-bodied plant that will grow up. [38]God provides that seed with the body he wishes; he gives each seed its own proper body.

[39]And the flesh of living beings is not all the same kind of flesh; men have one kind of flesh, animals another, birds another, and fish another.

[40]And there are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies; there is a beauty that belongs to heavenly bodies, and another kind of beauty that belongs to earthly bodies. [41]The sun has its own beauty, the moon another beauty,

and the stars a different beauty; and even among stars there are different kinds of beauty.

42This is how it will be when the dead are raised to life. When the body is buried it is mortal; when raised, it will be immortal. 43When buried, it is ugly and weak; when raised, it will be beautiful and strong. 44When buried, it is a physical body; when raised, it will be a spiritual body. There is, of course, a physical body, so there has to be a spiritual body. 45For the scripture says, "The first man, Adam, was created a living being"; but the last Adam is the life-giving Spirit. 46It is not the spiritual that comes first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. 47The first Adam was made of the dust of the earth; the second Adam came from heaven. 48Those who belong to the earth are like the one who was made of earth; those who are of heaven are like the one who came from heaven. 49Just as we wear the likeness of the man made of earth, so we will wear the likeness of the Man from heaven.

50What I mean, brothers, is this: what is made of flesh and blood cannot share in God's Kingdom, and what is mortal cannot possess immortality.

51Listen to this secret: we shall not all die, but in an instant we shall all be changed, 52as quickly as the blinking of an eye, when the last trumpet sounds. For when it sounds, the dead will be raised immortal beings, and we shall all be changed. 53For what is mortal must clothe itself with what is immortal; what will die must clothe itself with what cannot die. 54So when what is mortal has been clothed with what is immortal, and when what will die has been clothed with what cannot die, then the scripture will come true: "Death is destroyed; victory is complete!"

55 "Where, Death, is your victory?
Where, Death, is your power to hurt?"

56Death gets its power to hurt from sin, and sin gets its power from the Law. 57But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

58So then, my dear brothers, stand firm and steady. Keep busy always in your work for the Lord, since you know that nothing you do in the Lord's service is ever without value.

Put aside some money

The Offering for Fellow Believers

16 Now the matter about the money to be raised to help God's people in Judea: you must do what I told the churches in Galatia to do. [2]Every Sunday each of you must put aside some money, in proportion to what he has earned, and save it up, so there will be no need to collect money when I come. [3]After I come I shall send the men you have approved, with letters of introduction, to take your gift to Jerusalem. [4]If it seems worthwhile for me to go, then they will go along with me.

Paul's Plans

[5]I shall come to you after I have gone through Macedonia—because I am going through Macedonia. [6]I shall probably spend some time with you, perhaps the whole winter, and then you can help me to continue my trip, wherever it is I shall go next. [7]I do not want to see you just briefly in passing. I hope to spend quite a long time with you, if the Lord allows.

[8]But I will stay here in Ephesus until the day of Pentecost. [9]There is a real opportunity here for great and worthwhile work, even though there are many opponents.

[10]If Timothy comes your way, however, be sure to make him feel welcome among you, because he is work-

ing for the Lord, just as I am. [11]No one is to look down on him, but you must help him continue his trip in peace, so that he will come back to me; for I am expecting him back with the brothers.

[12]Now, about brother Apollos. I have often encouraged him to visit you with the other brothers, but he is not completely convinced that he should go right now. When he gets the chance, however, he will go.

Final Words

[13]Be alert, stand firm in the faith, be brave, be strong. [14]Do all your work in love.

[15]You know about Stephanas and his family; they are the first Christian converts in Greece, and have given themselves to the service of God's people. I beg you, my brothers, [16]to follow the leadership of such people as these, and of anyone else who works and serves with them.

[17]I am happy over the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus; they have made up for your absence, [18]and have cheered me up, just as they cheered you up. Such men as these deserve notice.

[19]The churches in the province of Asia send you their greetings; Aquila and Priscilla and the church that meets in their house send warm Christian greetings. [20]All the brothers here send greetings.

Greet one another with a brotherly kiss.

[21]With my own hand I write this: *Greetings from Paul.*

[22]Whoever does not love the Lord—a curse on him!

Marana tha—Our Lord, come!

[23]The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.

[24]My love be with you all in Christ Jesus.

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

1 From Paul, apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will,
and from our brother Timothy—

To the church of God in Corinth, and to all God's people in all Greece:

[2]May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Paul Gives Thanks to God

[3]Let us give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the merciful Father, the God from whom all help comes! [4]He helps us in all our troubles, so that we are able to help those who have all kinds of troubles, using the same help that we ourselves have received from God. [5]Just as we have a share in Christ's many sufferings, so also through Christ we share in his great

Help those who have all kinds of troubles

help. [6]If we suffer, it is for your help and salvation; if we are helped, then you too are helped and given the strength to endure with patience the same sufferings that we also endure. [7]So our hope in you is never shaken; we know that just as you share in our sufferings, you also share in the help we receive.

[8]We want to remind you, brothers, of the trouble we had in the province of Asia. The burdens laid upon us were so great and so heavy, that we gave up all hope of

living. [9]We felt that the sentence of death had been passed against us. But this happened so that we should rely, not on ourselves, but only on God, who raises the dead. [10]From such terrible dangers of death he saved us, and will save us; and we have placed our hope in him that he will save us again, [11]as you help us by means of your prayers for us. So it will be that the many prayers for us will be answered, and God will bless us; and many will raise their voices to him in thanksgiving for us.

The Change in Paul's Plans

[12]This is what we are proud of: our conscience assures us that our lives in this world, and especially our relations with you, have been ruled by God-given frankness and sincerity, by the power of God's grace, and not by human wisdom. [13]We write to you only what you can read and understand. And I hope that you will come to understand completely [14]what you now understand only in part, so that in the Day of the Lord Jesus you can be as proud of us as we shall be of you.

[15]I was so sure of all this that I made plans at first to visit you in order that you might be blessed twice. [16]For I planned to visit you on my way to Macedonia and again on my way back, to get help from you for my trip to Judea. [17]In planning this did I appear fickle? When I make my plans, do I make them from selfish motives, ready to say "Yes, yes" and "No, no" at the same time? [18]As God is true, my promise to you was not a "Yes" and a "No." [19]For Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was preached among you by Silas, Timothy, and myself, is not one who is "Yes" and "No." On the contrary, he is God's "Yes"; [20]for it is he who is the "Yes" to all of God's promises. This is the reason that through Jesus Christ our "Amen" is said, to the glory of God. [21]It is God himself who makes us sure, with you, of our life in Christ; it is God himself who has set us apart, [22]who placed his mark of ownership upon us, and who gave the Holy Spirit in our hearts as the guarantee of all that he has for us.

[23]I call God as my witness—he knows my heart! It was in order to spare you that I decided not to go to Corinth. [24]We are not trying to dictate to you what you

must believe; because you stand firm in the faith. Instead, we are working with you for your own happiness.

2 So I made up my mind about this: I would not come to you again to make you sad. [2]For if I were to make you sad, who would be left to cheer me up? Only the very persons I had saddened. [3]That is why I wrote that letter to you—I did not want to come to you and be made sad by the very people who should make me glad. For I am convinced that when I am happy, then all of you are happy too. [4]I wrote you with a greatly troubled and distressed heart, and with many tears, not to make you sad, but to make you realize how much I love you all.

Forgiveness for the Offender

[5]Now, if anyone has made somebody sad, he has not done it to me but to you; or to some of you, at least, since I do not want to be too hard on him. [6]It is enough for this person that he has been punished in this way by most of you. [7]Now, however, you should forgive him and encourage him, to keep him from becoming so sad as to give up completely. [8]Let him know, then, I beg you, that you really do love him. [9]I wrote you that letter for this very reason: I wanted to find out how well you had stood the test, and whether you are always ready to obey my instructions. [10]When you forgive someone for what he has done, I forgive him too. For when I forgive —if, indeed, I need to forgive anything—I do it because of you, in Christ's presence, [11]in order to keep Satan from getting the upper hand over us; for we know what his plans are.

Paul's Anxiety in Troas

[12]When I arrived in Troas to preach the Good News about Christ, I found that the Lord had opened the way for the work there. [13]But I was deeply worried because I could not find our brother Titus. So I said good-bye to the people there, and went on to Macedonia.

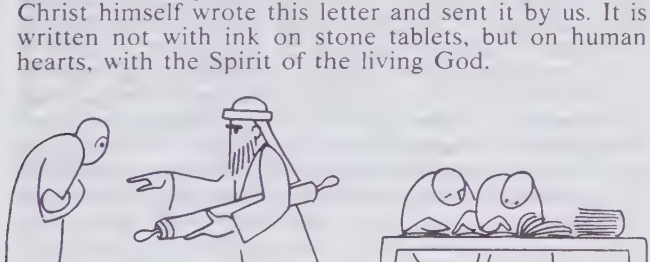
Victory through Christ

[14]But thanks be to God! For in union with Christ we are always led by God as prisoners in Christ's victory procession. God uses us to make the knowledge about

Christ spread everywhere like a sweet smell. [15]For we are like a sweet-smelling incense offered by Christ to God, which spreads among those who are being saved and those who are being lost. [16]For those who are being lost, it is a deadly stench that kills; for those who are being saved, it is a fragrance that brings life. Who, then, is capable for such a task? [17]We are not like so many others, who handle God's message as if it were cheap merchandise; but because God has sent us, we speak with sincerity in his presence, as servants of Christ.

Servants of the New Covenant

3 Does this sound as if we were again boasting about ourselves? Could it be that, like some other people, we need letters of recommendation to you or from you? [2]You yourselves are the letter we have, written on our hearts, for everyone to know and read. [3]It is clear that Christ himself wrote this letter and sent it by us. It is written not with ink on stone tablets, but on human hearts, with the Spirit of the living God.



The written law brings death

[4]We say this because we have confidence in God through Christ. [5]There is nothing in us that allows us to claim that we are capable of doing this work. The capacity we have comes from God; [6]it is he who made us capable of serving the new covenant, which consists not of a written law, but of the Spirit. The written law brings death, but the Spirit gives life.

[7]The Law was carved in letters on stone tablets, and

God's glory appeared when it was given. Even though the brightness on Moses' face faded away, it was so strong that the people of Israel could not keep their eyes fixed on him. If the Law, whose service was to bring death, came with such glory, [8]how much greater is the glory that belongs to the service of the Spirit! [9]The service by which men are condemned was glorious; how much more glorious is the service by which men are declared innocent! [10]We may say that, because of the far brighter glory now, the glory that was so bright in the past is gone. [11]For if there was glory in that which lasted for a while, how much more glory is there in that which lasts forever!

[12]Because we have this hope, we are very bold. [13]We are not like Moses, who had to put a veil over his face, so that the people of Israel would not see the brightness fade and disappear. [14]Their minds, indeed, were closed; and to this very day their minds are covered with the same veil, as they read the books of the old covenant. The veil is removed only when a man is joined to Christ. [15]Even today, whenever they read the Law of Moses, the veil still covers their minds. [16]But it is removed, as the scripture says, "Moses' veil was removed when he turned to the Lord." [17]Now, "the Lord" in this passage is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is present, there is freedom. [18]All of us, then, reflect the glory of the Lord with uncovered faces; and that same glory, coming from the Lord who is the Spirit, transforms us into his very likeness, in an ever greater degree of glory.

Spiritual Treasure in Clay Pots

4 God, in his mercy, has given us this service, and so we do not become discouraged. [2]We put aside all secret and shameful deeds; we do not act with deceit, nor do we falsify the word of God. In the full light of truth, we live in God's sight and try to commend ourselves to everyone's good conscience. [3]For if the gospel we preach is hidden, it is hidden only to those who are being lost. [4]They do not believe because their minds have been kept in the dark by the evil god of this world. He keeps them from seeing the light shining on them, the light that comes from the Good News about the

glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God. 5For it is not ourselves that we preach; we preach Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. 6The God who said, "Out of darkness the light shall shine!" is the same God who made his light shine in our hearts, to bring us the light of the knowledge of God's glory, shining in the face of Christ.

7Yet we who have this spiritual treasure are like common clay pots, to show that the supreme power belongs to God, not to us. 8We are often troubled, but not crushed; sometimes in doubt, but never in despair; 9there are many enemies, but we are never without a friend; and though badly hurt at times, we are not destroyed. 10At all times we carry in our mortal bodies the death of Jesus, so that his life also may be seen in our bodies. 11Throughout our lives we are always in danger of death for Jesus' sake, in order that his life may be seen in this mortal body of ours. 12This means that death is at work in us; but life is at work in you.

13The scripture says, "I spoke because I believed." In the same spirit of faith, we also speak because we believe. 14We know that God, who raised the Lord Jesus to life, will also raise us up with Jesus and bring us, together with you, into his presence. 15All this is for your sake; and as God's grace reaches more and more people, they will offer more prayers of thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

Living by Faith

16For this reason we never become discouraged. Even though our physical being is gradually decaying, yet our spiritual being is renewed day after day. 17And this small and temporary trouble we suffer will bring us a tremendous and eternal glory, much greater than the trouble. 18For we fix our attention, not on things that are seen, but on things that are unseen. What can be seen lasts only for a time; but what cannot be seen lasts forever.

5 For we know that when this tent we live in—our body here on earth—is torn down, God will have a house in heaven for us to live in, a home he himself made, which will last forever. 2And now we sigh, so great is our desire to have our home which is in heaven

put on over us; [3]by being clothed with it we shall not be found without a body. [4]While we live in this earthly tent we groan with a feeling of oppression; it is not that we want to get rid of our earthly body, but that we want to have the heavenly one put on over us, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life. [5]God is the one who has prepared us for this change, and he gave us his Spirit as the guarantee of all that he has for us.

[6]So we are always full of courage. We know that as long as we are at home in this body we are away from the Lord's home. [7]For our life is a matter of faith, not of sight. [8]We are full of courage, and would much prefer to leave our home in this body and be at home with the Lord. [9]More than anything else, however, we want to please him, whether in our home here or there. [10]For all of us must appear before Christ, to be judged by him. Each one will receive what he deserves, according to what he has done, good or bad, in his bodily life.

Friendship with God through Christ

[11]We know what it means to fear the Lord, and so we try to persuade men. God knows us completely, and I hope that in your hearts you know me as well. [12]We are not trying again to recommend ourselves to you; rather, we are trying to give you a good reason to be proud of us, so that you will be able to answer those who boast about a man's appearance, and not about his character. [13]Are we really insane? It is for God's sake. Or are we sane? It is for your sake. [14]We are ruled by Christ's love for us, now that we recognize that one man died for all men, which means that all men take part in his death. [15]He died for all men so that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but only for him who died and was raised to life for their sake.

[16]No longer, then, do we judge anyone by human standards. Even if at one time we judged Christ according to human standards, we no longer do so. [17]When anyone is joined to Christ he is a new being: the old is gone, the new has come. [18]All this is done by God, who through Christ changed us from enemies into his

friends, and gave us the task of making others his friends also. [19]Our message is that God was making friends of all men through Christ. God did not keep an account of their sins against them, and he has given us the message of how he makes them his friends.

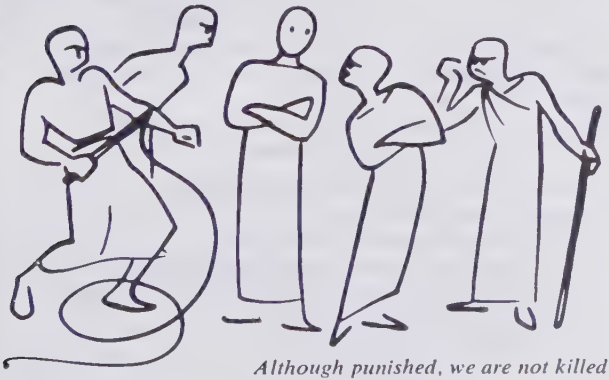
[20]Here we are, then, speaking for Christ, as though God himself were appealing to you through us: on Christ's behalf, we beg you, let God change you from enemies into friends! [21]Christ was without sin, but for our sake God made him share our sin in order that we, in union with him, might share the righteousness of God.

6 In our work together with God, then, we beg of you; you have received God's grace, and you must not let it be wasted. [2]Hear what God says:

"I heard you in the hour to show you favor,
I helped you on the day to save you."

Listen! This is the hour to receive God's favor, today is the day to be saved!

[3]We do not want anyone to find fault with our work, so we try not to put obstacles in anyone's way. [4]Instead, in everything we do we show that we are God's servants, by enduring troubles, hardships, and difficulties with great patience. [5]We have been beaten, jailed,



Although punished, we are not killed

and mobbed; we have been overworked and have gone without sleep or food. 6By our purity, knowledge, patience, and kindness we have shown ourselves to be God's servants; by the Holy Spirit, by our true love, 7by our message of truth, and by the power of God. We have righteousness as our weapon, both to attack and to defend ourselves. 8We are honored and disgraced; we are insulted and praised. We are treated as liars, yet we speak the truth; 9as unknown, yet we are known by all; as though we were dead, but, as you see, we live on. Although punished, we are not killed; 10although saddened, we are always glad; we seem poor, but we make many people rich; we seem to have nothing, yet we really possess everything.

11Dear friends in Corinth! We have spoken frankly to you, we have opened wide our hearts. 12We have not closed our hearts to you; it is you who have closed your hearts to us. 13I speak now as though you were my children: show us the same feelings that we have for you. Open wide your hearts!

Warning against Pagan Influences

14Do not try to work together as equals with unbelievers, for it cannot be done. How can right and wrong be partners? How can light and darkness live together? 15How can Christ and the Devil agree? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? 16How can God's temple come to terms with pagan idols? For we are the temple of the living God! As God himself has said,

"I will make my home with my people
and live among them;
I will be their God,
and they shall be my people."

17And so the Lord says,

"You must leave them,
and separate yourselves from them.
Have nothing to do with what is unclean,
and I will accept you.

18I will be your father,

and you shall be my sons and daughters,
says the Lord Almighty."

7 All these promises are made to us, my dear friends. So then, let us purify ourselves from everything that makes body or soul unclean, and let us be completely holy, by living in the fear of God.

Paul's Joy

2 Make room for us in your hearts. We have done wrong to no one, we have ruined no one, nor tried to take advantage of anyone. 3 I do not say this to condemn you; for, as I have said before, you are so dear to us that we are together always, whether we live or die. 4 I am so sure of you, I take such pride in you! In all our troubles I am still full of courage, I am running over with joy.

Encouraged us with the coming of Titus

5 Even after we arrived in Macedonia we did not have any rest. There were troubles everywhere, quarrels with others, fears in our hearts. 6 But God, who encourages the downhearted, encouraged us with the coming of Titus. 7 It was not only his coming, but also his report of how you encouraged him. He told us how much you want to see me, how sorry you are, how ready you are to defend me; and so I am even happier now.

[8]For even if that letter of mine made you sad, I am not sorry I wrote it. I could have been sorry about it when I saw that the letter made you sad for a while. [9]But now I am happy—not because I made you sad, but because your sadness made you change your ways. That sadness was used by God, and so we caused you no harm. [10]For the sadness that is used by God brings a change of heart that leads to salvation—and there is no regret in that! But worldly sadness causes death. [11]See what God did with this sadness of yours: how earnest it has made you, how eager to prove your innocence! Such indignation, such alarm, such feelings, such devotion, such readiness to punish wrongdoing! You have shown yourselves to be without fault in the whole matter.

[12]So, even though I wrote that letter, it was not because of the one who did wrong, or the one who was wronged. Instead, I wrote it to make plain to you, in God's sight, how deep is your devotion to us. [13]That is why we were encouraged.

Not only were we encouraged; how happy Titus made us with his happiness over the way in which all of you helped to cheer him up. [14]I did boast of you to him, and you have not disappointed me. We have always spoken the truth to you. In the same way, the boast we made to Titus has proved true. [15]And so his love for you grows stronger, as he remembers how all of you were ready to obey, how you welcomed him with fear and trembling. [16]How happy I am that I can depend on you completely!

Christian Giving

8 We want you to know, brothers, what God's grace has done in the churches in Macedonia. [2]They have been severely tested by the troubles they went through; but their joy was so great that they were extremely generous in their giving, even though they were very poor. [3]I assure you, they gave as much as they could, and even more than they could. Of their own free will [4]they begged us and insisted on the privilege of having a part in helping God's people in Judea. [5]It was more than we could have hoped for! First they gave themselves to the Lord; and then, by God's will, they gave

themselves to us as well. [6]So we urged Titus, who began this work, to continue it and help you complete this special service of love. [7]You are so rich in all you have: in faith, speech, and knowledge, in your eagerness to help, and in your love for us. And so we want you to be generous also in this service of love.

[8]I am not laying down any rules. But by showing how eager others are to help, I am trying to find out how real your own love is. [9]For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; rich as he was, he made himself poor for your sake, in order to make you rich by means of his poverty.

[10]This is my opinion on the matter: it is better for you to finish now what you began last year. You were the first, not only to act, but also to be willing to act. [11]On with it, then, and finish the job! Be as eager to finish it as you were to plan it, and do it with what you have. [12]If you are eager to give, God will accept your gift on the basis of what you have to give, not on what you don't have.

[13-14]I am not trying to relieve others by putting a burden on you; but since you have plenty at this time, it is only fair that you should help those who are in need. Then, when you are in need and they have plenty, they will help you. In this way both are treated equally. [15]As the scripture says,

> "The man who gathered much
> did not have too much,
> and the man who gathered little
> did not have too little."

Titus and His Companions

[16]How we thank God for making Titus as eager as we are to help you! [17]Not only did he welcome our request; he was so eager to help that of his own free will he decided to go to you. [18]With him we are sending the brother who is highly respected in all the churches for his work in preaching the gospel. [19]And besides that, he has been chosen and appointed by the churches to travel with us as we carry out this service of love for the Lord's glory, and to show that we want to help.

[20]We are being careful not to stir up any complaints

about the way we handle this generous gift. [21]Our purpose is to do what is right, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

[22]So we are sending our brother with them; we have tested him many times, and found him always very eager to help. And now that he has so much confidence in you, he is all the more eager to help. [23]As for Titus, he is my partner who works with me to help you; as for the other brothers who are going with him, they represent the churches and bring glory to Christ. [24]Show your love to them, so that all the churches will be sure of it and know that we are right in boasting of you.

Help for Fellow Christians

9 There is really no need for me to write you about the help being sent to God's people in Judea. [2]I know that you are willing to help, and I have boasted of you to the people in Macedonia. "The brothers in Greece," I said, "have been ready to help since last year." Your eagerness has stirred up most of them. [3]Now I am sending these brothers, so that our boasting of you in this matter may not turn out to be empty words. But, just as I said, you will be ready with your help. [4]Or else, if the people from Macedonia should come with me and find out that you are not ready, how ashamed we would be—not to speak of your shame –for feeling so sure of you! [5]So I thought it necessary to urge these brothers to go to you ahead of me and get ready in advance the gift you promised to make. Then it will be ready when I arrive, and it will show that you give because you want to, not because you have to.

[6]Remember this: the man who plants few seeds will have a small crop; the one who plants many seeds will have a large crop. [7]Each one should give, then, as he has decided, not with regret or out of a sense of duty; for God loves the one who gives gladly. [8]And God is able to give you more than you need, so that you will always have all you need for yourselves and more than enough for every good cause. [9]As the scripture says,

"He gives generously to the poor;
his kindness lasts forever."

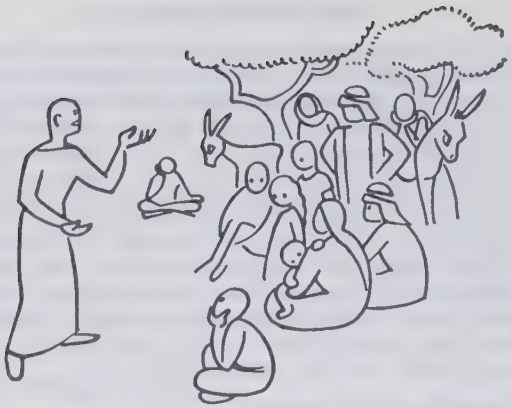
[10]And God, who supplies seed for the sower and bread

to eat, will also supply you with all the seed you need and make it grow, to produce a rich harvest from your generosity. [11]He will always make you rich enough to be generous at all times, so that many will thank God for your gifts they receive from us. [12]For this service you perform not only meets the needs of God's people, but also produces an outpouring of grateful thanks to God. [13]And because of the proof which this service of yours brings, many will give glory to God for your loyalty to the gospel of Christ, which you profess, and for your generosity in sharing with them and all others. [14]And so they will pray for you with great affection for you because of the extraordinary grace God has shown you. [15]Let us thank God for his priceless gift!

Paul Defends His Ministry

10 I, Paul, make a personal appeal to you—I who am said to be meek and mild when I am with you, but bold toward you when I am away from you. I beg of you, by the gentleness and kindness of Christ: [2]Do not force me to be bold with you when I come; for I am sure I can be bold with those who say that we act from worldly motives. [3]It is true that we live in the world; but we do not fight from worldly motives. [4]The weapons we use in our fight are not the world's weapons, but God's powerful weapons, with which to destroy strongholds. We destroy false arguments; [5]we pull down every proud obstacle that is raised against the knowledge of God; we take every thought captive and make it obey Christ. [6]And after you have proved your complete loyalty, we will be ready to punish any act of disloyalty.

[7]You are looking at things as they are on the outside. Is there someone there who reckons himself to belong to Christ? Well, let him think again about himself, because we belong to Christ just as much as he does. [8]For I am not ashamed, even if I have boasted somewhat too much of the authority that the Lord has given us—authority to build you up, that is, not to tear you down. [9]I do not want it to appear that I am trying to frighten you with my letters. [10]Someone will say, "Paul's letters are severe and strong, but when he is with us in person he is weak, and his words are nothing!" [11]Such a person must understand that there is no difference between



The good news about Christ

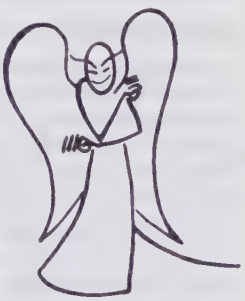
what we write in our letters when we are away, and what we will do when we are there with you.

[12]Of course we would not dare classify ourselves or compare ourselves with those who rate themselves so highly. How stupid they are! They make up their own standards to measure themselves by, and judge themselves by their own standards! [13]As for us, however, our boasting will not go beyond certain limits; it will stay within the limits of the work which God has set for us, which includes our work among you. [14]And since you are within those limits, we did not go beyond them when we came to you, bringing the Good News about Christ. [15]So we do not boast of the work that others have done beyond the limits God set for us. Instead, we hope that your faith may grow, and that we may be able to do a much greater work among you, always within the limits that God has set. [16]Then we can preach the Good News in other countries beyond you, and shall not have to boast of work already done in another man's field.

[17]But as the scripture says, "Whoever wants to boast, must boast of what the Lord has done." [18]Because a man is really approved when the Lord thinks well of him, not when he thinks well of himself.

Paul and the False Apostles

11 I wish you would tolerate me, even when I am a bit foolish. Please do! [2]I am jealous for you just as God is; you are like a pure virgin whom I have promised in marriage to one man only, who is Christ. [3]I am afraid that your minds will be corrupted and that you will abandon your full and pure devotion to Christ—in the same way that Eve was deceived by the snake's clever lies. [4]For you gladly tolerate anyone who comes to you and preaches a different Jesus, not the one we preached; and you accept a spirit and a gospel completely different from the Spirit and the gospel you received from us!



Satan can change himself

[5]I do not think that I am the least bit inferior to those very special "apostles" of yours! [6]Perhaps I am an amateur in speaking, but certainly not in knowledge; we have made this clear to you at all times and in all conditions.

[7]I did not charge you a thing when I preached the Good News of God to you; I humbled myself in order to make you important. Was that wrong of me? [8]While I was working among you I was paid by other churches. I was robbing them, so to speak, to help you. [9]And during the time I was with you I did not bother you for help when I needed money; the brothers who came from Macedonia brought me everything I needed. As in the past, so in the future: I will never be a burden to you! [10]By Christ's truth in me, I promise that this boast of mine will not be silenced anywhere in all of Greece. [11]Why do I say this? Because I don't love you? God knows I do!

[12]I will go on doing what I am doing now, in order to keep those other "apostles" from having any reason for boasting and saying that they work in the same way that we do. [13]Those men are not true apostles—they are false apostles, who lie about their work and change themselves to look like real apostles of Christ. [14]Well, no

wonder! Even Satan can change himself to look like an angel of light! [15]So it is no great thing if his servants change themselves to look like servants of right. In the end they will get exactly what they deserve for the things they do.

Paul's Sufferings as an Apostle

[16]I repeat: no one should think that I am a fool. But if you do, at least accept me as a fool, just so I will have a little to boast of. [17]Of course what I am saying now is not what the Lord would have me say; in this matter of boasting I am really talking like a fool. [18]But since there are so many who boast for merely human reasons, I will do the same. [19]You yourselves are so wise, and so you gladly tolerate fools! [20]You tolerate anyone who orders you around, or takes advantage of you, or traps you, or looks down on you, or slaps you in the face. [21]I am ashamed to admit it: we were too timid to do that!

But if anyone dares to boast of something—I am talking like a fool—I will be just as daring. [22]Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they Abraham's descendants? So am I. [23]Are they Christ's servants? I sound like a madman—but I am a better servant than they are! I have worked much harder, I have been in prison more times, I have been whipped much more, and I have been near death more often. [24]Five times I was given the thirty-nine lashes by the Jews; [25]three times I was whipped by the Romans, and once I was stoned; I have been in three shipwrecks, and once I spent twenty-four hours in the water. [26]In my many travels I have been in danger from floods and from robbers, in danger from fellow Jews and from Gentiles; there have been dangers in the cities, dangers in the wilds, dangers on the high seas, and dangers from false friends. [27]There has been work and toil; often I have gone without sleep; I have been hungry and thirsty; I have often been without enough food, shelter, or clothing. [28]And, not to mention other things, every day I am under the pressure of my concern for all the churches. [29]When someone is weak, then I feel weak too; when someone is led into sin, I am filled with distress.

[30]If I must boast, I will boast of things that show how weak I am. [31]The God and Father of the Lord

Jesus—blessed be his name forever!—knows that I am not lying. [32]When I was in Damascus, the governor under King Aretas placed guards at the city gates to arrest me. [33]But I was let down in a basket, through an opening in the wall, and escaped from him.

Paul's Visions and Revelations

12 I have to boast, even though it doesn't do any good. But I will now talk about visions and revelations given me by the Lord. [2]I know a certain Christian man who fourteen years ago was snatched up to the highest heaven (I do not know whether this actually happened, or whether he had a vision—only God knows). [3]I repeat, I know that this man was snatched to Paradise (again, I do not know whether this actually happened, or whether it was a vision—only God knows), [4]and there he heard things which cannot be put into words, things that human lips may not speak. [5]So I will boast of this man—but I will not boast about myself, except the things that show how weak I am. [6]If I wanted to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be telling the truth. But I will not boast, because I do not want anyone to have a higher opinion of me than he has from what he has seen me do and heard me say.

[7]But to keep me from being puffed up with pride because of the many wonderful things I saw, I was given a painful physical ailment, which acts as Satan's messenger to beat me and keep me from being proud. [8]Three times I prayed to the Lord about this, and asked him to take it away. [9]His answer was, "My grace is all you need; for my power is strongest when you are weak." I am most happy, then, to be proud of my weaknesses, in order to feel the protection of Christ's power over me. [10]I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and difficulties for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Paul's Concern for the Corinthians

[11]I am acting like a fool—but you have made me do it. You are the ones who ought to show your approval of me. For even if I am nothing, I am in no way inferior to those very special "apostles" of yours. [12]The things

that prove that I am an apostle were done with all patience among you; there were signs and wonders and miracles. [13]How were you treated any worse than the other churches, except that I did not bother you for help? Please forgive me for being so unfair!

[14]This is now the third time that I am ready to come to visit you – and I will not make any demands on you. It is you I want, not your money. After all, children should not have to provide for their parents, but parents should provide for their children. [15]I will be glad to spend all I have, and myself as well, in order to help you. Will you love me less because I love you so much?

[16]You will agree, then, that I was not a burden to you. But, someone will say, I was tricky and trapped you with lies. [17]How? Did I take advantage of you through any of the messengers I sent? [18]I begged Titus to go, and I sent the other Christian brother with him. Would you say that Titus took advantage of you? Do not he and I act from the very same motives and behave in the same way?

[19]Perhaps you think that all along we have been trying to defend ourselves before you. No! We speak as Christ would have us speak, in the presence of God, and everything we do, dear friends, is done to help you. [20]I am afraid that when I get there I will find you different from what I would like you to be and you will find me different from what you would like me to be. I am afraid that I will find quarreling and jealousy, hot tempers and selfishness, insults and gossip, pride and disorder. [21]I am afraid that the next time I come my God will humiliate me in your presence, and I shall weep over many who sinned in the past and have not repented of the immoral things they have done, their sexual sins and lustful deeds.

Final Warnings and Greetings

13 This is now the third time that I am coming to visit you. "Any accusation must be upheld by the evidence of two or three witnesses" – as the scripture says. [2]I want to tell you who have sinned in the past, and

all the others: I said it before, during my second visit to you, but I will say it again now that I am away: the next time I come nobody will escape punishment. [3]You will have all the proof you want that Christ speaks through me. When he deals with you he is not weak; instead he shows his power among you. [4]For even though it was in weakness that he was put to death on the cross, it is by God's power that he lives. In union with him we also are weak; but in our relations with you, we shall live with him by God's power.

[5]Put yourselves to the test and judge yourselves, to find out whether you are living in faith. Surely you know that Christ Jesus is in you?—unless you have completely failed. [6]I trust you will know that we are not failures. [7]We pray to God that you will do no wrong—not in order to show that we are a success, but that you may do what is right, even though we may seem to be failures. [8]For we cannot do a thing against the truth, but only for it. [9]We are glad when we are weak but you are strong. And so we also pray that you will become perfect. [10]That is why I write this while I am away from you; it is so that when I arrive I will not have to deal harshly with you in using the authority that the Lord gave me —authority to build you up, not to tear you down.

[11]And now, brothers, good-bye! Strive for perfection; listen to my appeals; agree with one another, and live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

[12]Greet one another with a brotherly kiss.

All God's people send you their greetings.

[13]The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

1 From Paul, whose call to be an apostle did not come from man or by means of man, but from Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from death. 2All the brothers who are here join me in sending greetings to the churches of Galatia:

3May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

4In order to set us free from this present evil age, Christ gave himself for our sins, in obedience to the will of our God and Father. 5To God be the glory forever and ever! Amen.

The One Gospel

6I am surprised at you! In no time at all you are deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ, and are going to another gospel. 7Actually, there is no "other gospel," but I say it because there are some people who are upsetting you and trying to change the gospel of Christ. 8But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel that is different from the one we preached to you, may he be condemned to hell! 9We have said it before, and now I say it again: if anyone preaches to you a gospel that is different from the one you accepted, may he be condemned to hell!

10Does this sound as if I am trying to win men's approval? No! I want God's approval! Am I trying to be popular with men? If I were still trying to do so, I would not be a servant of Christ.

How Paul Became an Apostle

11Let me tell you, my brothers, that the gospel I preach was not made by man. 12I did not receive it from any man, nor did anyone teach it to me. Instead, it was Jesus Christ himself who revealed it to me.

13You have been told of the way I used to live when I was devoted to the Jewish religion, how I persecuted without mercy the church of God and did my best to destroy it. 14I was ahead of most fellow Jews of my age

in my practice of the Jewish religion. I was much more devoted to the traditions of our ancestors.

15But God, in his grace, chose me even before I was born, and called me to serve him. And when he decided 16to reveal his Son to me, so that I might preach the Good News about him to the Gentiles, I did not go to anyone for advice, 17nor did I go to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me. Instead, I went at once to Arabia, and then I returned to Damascus. 18It was three years later that I went to Jerusalem to get information from Peter, and I stayed with him for two weeks. 19I did not see any other apostle except James, the Lord's brother.

20What I write is true. I am not lying, so help me God!

21Afterward I went to places in Syria and Cilicia. 22At that time the members of the Christian churches in Judea did not know me personally. 23They knew only what others said, "The man who used to persecute us is now preaching the faith that he once tried to destroy!" 24And so they praised God because of me.

Paul and the Other Apostles

2 Fourteen years later I went back to Jerusalem with Barnabas; I also took Titus along with me. 2I went because God revealed to me that I should go. In a private meeting with the leaders, I explained to them the gospel message that I preach to the Gentiles. I did not want my work in the past or in the present to go for nothing. 3My companion Titus, even though he is Greek, was not forced to be circumcised, 4although some men, who had pretended to be brothers and joined the group, wanted to circumcise him. These people had slipped in as spies, to find out about the freedom we have through our union with Christ Jesus. They wanted to make slaves of us. 5We did not give in to them for a minute, in order to keep the truth of the gospel safe for you.

6But those who seemed to be the leaders—I say this because it makes no difference to me what they were; God does not judge by outward appearances—those leaders, I say, made no new suggestions to me. 7On the contrary, they saw that God had given me the task of

preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as he had given Peter the task of preaching the gospel to the Jews. [8]For by God's power I was made an apostle to the Gentiles, just as Peter was made an apostle to the Jews. [9]James, Peter, and John, who seemed to be the leaders, recognized that God had given me this special task; so they shook hands with Barnabas and me. As partners we all agreed that we would work among the Gentiles and they among the Jews. [10]All they asked was that we should remember the needy in their group, the very thing I have worked hard to do.

Paul Rebukes Peter at Antioch

[11]When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him in public, because he was clearly wrong. [12]Before some men who had been sent by James arrived there, Peter had been eating with the Gentile brothers. But after these men arrived, he drew back and would not eat with them, because he was afraid of those who were in favor of circumcising the Gentiles. [13]The other Jewish brothers started acting like cowards, along with Peter; and even Barnabas was swept along by their cowardly action. [14]When I saw that they were not walking a straight path in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter, in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you have been living like a Gentile, not like a Jew. How, then, can you try to force Gentiles to live like Jews?"

Jews and Gentiles Are Saved by Faith

[15]Indeed, we are Jews by birth, and not Gentile sinners. [16]Yet we know that a man is put right with God only through faith in Jesus Christ, never by doing what the Law requires. We, too, have believed in Christ Jesus in order to be put right with God through our faith in Christ, and not by doing what the Law requires. For no man is put right with God by doing what the Law requires. [17]If, then, as we try to be put right with God by our union with Christ, it is found that we are sinners as much as the Gentiles are—does this mean that Christ has served the interests of sin? By no means! [18]If I start to build up again what I have torn down, it proves that I am breaking the Law. [19]So far as the Law is concerned, however, I am dead—killed by the Law itself—in order

that I might live for God. I have been put to death with Christ on his cross, [20]so that it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. This life that I live now, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave his life for me. [21]I do not reject the grace of God. If a man is put right with God through the Law, it means that Christ died for nothing!

Law or Faith

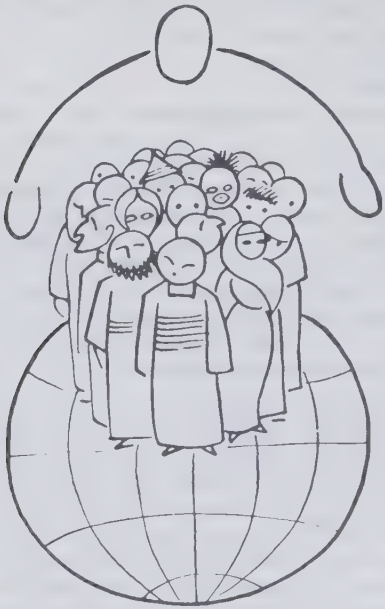
3 You foolish Galatians! Who put a spell on you? Right before your eyes you had a plain description of the death of Jesus Christ on the cross! [2]Tell me just this one thing: did you receive God's Spirit by doing what the Law requires, or by hearing and believing the gospel? [3]How can you be so foolish! You began by God's Spirit; do you now want to finish by your own power? [4]Did all your experience mean nothing at all? Surely it meant something! [5]Does God give you the Spirit and work miracles among you because you do what the Law requires, or because you hear and believe the gospel?

[6]It is just as the scripture says about Abraham, "He believed God, and because of his faith God accepted him as righteous." [7]You should realize, then, that the people who have faith are the real descendants of Abraham. [8]The scripture saw ahead of time that God would put the Gentiles right with himself through faith. And so the scripture preached the Good News to Abraham ahead of time: "Through you God will bless all the people on earth." [9]Abraham believed and was blessed; so all who believe are blessed as he was.

[10]Those who depend on obeying the Law live under a curse. For the scripture says, "Whoever does not always obey everything that is written in the book of the Law is under God's curse!" [11]Now, it is clear that no man is put right with God by means of the Law; because the scripture says, "He who is put right with God through faith shall live." [12]But the Law does not depend on faith. Instead, as the scripture says, "The man who does everything the Law requires will live by it."

[13]But Christ has redeemed us from the curse that the Law brings, by becoming a curse for us; because the scripture says, "Anyone who is hanged on a tree is

under God's curse." [14]Christ did this in order that the blessing God promised Abraham might be given to the Gentiles by means of Christ Jesus, so that we, through faith, might receive the Spirit promised by God.



You are all one in union with Christ Jesus

The Law and the Promise

[15]Brothers, I am going to use an everyday example: when two men agree on a matter and sign a covenant, no one can break that covenant or add anything to it. [16]Now, God made his promises to Abraham and to his descendant. The scripture does not say, "and to your descendants," meaning many people. It says, "and to your descendant," meaning one person only, who is Christ. [17]What I mean is this: God made a covenant and promised to keep it. The Law, which came four hundred

and thirty years later, cannot break that covenant and cancel God's promise. 18For if what God gives depends on the Law, then it no longer depends on his promise. However, it was because God had promised it that he gave it to Abraham.

19What was the purpose of the Law, then? It was added in order to show what wrongdoing is, and was meant to last until the coming of Abraham's descendant, to whom the promise was made. The Law was handed down by angels, with a man acting as a go-between. 20But a go-between is not needed when there is only one person; and God is one.

The Purpose of the Law

21Does this mean that the Law is against God's promises? No, not at all! For if a law had been given that could bring life to men, then man could be put right with God through law. 22But the scripture has said that the whole world is under the power of sin, so that the gift which is promised on the basis of faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

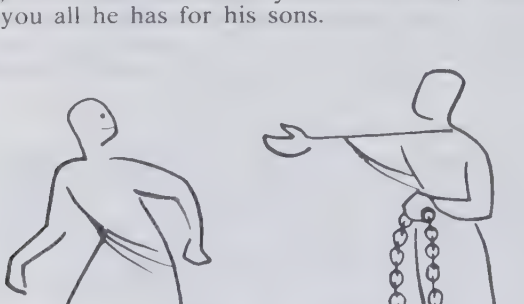
23Before the time for faith came, however, the Law kept us all locked up as prisoners, until this coming faith should be revealed. 24So the Law was in charge of us until Christ came, so that we might be put right with God through faith. 25Now that the time of faith is here, the Law is no longer in charge of us.

26It is through faith that all of you are God's sons in union with Christ Jesus. 27You were baptized into union with Christ, and so have taken upon yourselves the qualities of Christ himself. 28So there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles, between slaves and free men, between men and women; you are all one in union with Christ Jesus. 29If you belong to Christ, then you are the descendants of Abraham, and will receive what God has promised.

4 But to continue: the son who will receive his father's property is treated just like a slave while he is young, even though he really owns everything. 2While he is young, there are men who take care of him and manage his affairs until the time set by his father. 3In the same way, we too were slaves of the ruling spirits of the universe, before we reached spiritual maturity. 4But

when the right time finally came, God sent his own Son. He came as the son of a human mother, and lived under the Jewish Law, [5]to redeem those who were under the Law, so that we might become God's sons.

[6]To show that you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who cries, "Father, my Father." [7]So then, you are no longer a slave, but a son. And since you are his son, God will give you all he has for his sons.



You are no longer a slave, but a son

Paul's Concern for the Galatians

[8]In the past you did not know God, and so you were slaves of beings who are not gods. [9]But now that you know God—or, I should say, now that God knows you —how is it that you want to turn back to those weak and pitiful ruling spirits? Why do you want to become their slaves all over again? [10]You pay special attention to certain days, months, seasons, and years. [11]I am afraid for you! Can it be that all my work for you has been for nothing?

[12]I beg you, my brothers, be like me. After all, I am like you. You have not done me any wrong. [13]You remember why I preached the gospel to you the first time; it was because I was sick. [14]But you did not

despise or reject me, even though my physical condition was a great trial to you. Instead, you received me as you would God's angel; you received me as you would Christ Jesus. [15]You were so happy! What has happened? I myself can say this about you: you would have taken out your own eyes, if you could, and given them to me. [16]Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth?

[17]Those other people show a deep concern for you, but their intentions are not good. All they want is to separate you from me, so that you will have the same concern for them as they have for you. [18]Now, it is good to have such a deep concern for a good purpose —this is true always, and not only when I am with you. [19]My dear children! Once again, just like a mother in childbirth, I feel the same kind of pain for you, until Christ's nature is formed in you. [20]How I wish I were with you now, so that I could take a different attitude toward you. I am so worried about you!

The Example of Hagar and Sarah

[21]Let me ask those of you who want to be subject to the Law: do you not hear what the Law says? [22]It says that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman, the other by a free woman. [23]His son by the slave woman was born in the usual way, but his son by the free woman was born as a result of God's promise. [24]This can be taken as a figure: the two women are two covenants, one of which (Hagar, that is) comes from Mount Sinai, whose children are born in slavery. [25]Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia, and she is a figure of the present city of Jerusalem, a slave with all its people. [26]But the heavenly Jerusalem is free, and she is our mother. [27]For the scripture says,

> "Be happy, woman who never had children!
> Shout and cry with joy, you who never felt the pains of childbirth!
> For the woman who was deserted will have more children
> than the woman living with her husband."

[28]Now, you, my brothers, are God's children as a result of his promise, just as Isaac was. [29]At that time the son who was born in the usual way persecuted the one who was born because of God's Spirit; and it is the same now. [30]But what does the scripture say? It says, "Throw out the slave woman and her son; for the son of the slave woman will not share the father's property with the son of the free woman." [31]So then, my brothers, we are not the children of a slave woman, but of the free woman.

Preserve Your Freedom

5 Freedom is what we have—Christ has set us free! Stand, then, as free men, and do not allow yourselves to become slaves again.

[2]Listen! I, Paul, tell you this: if you allow yourselves to be circumcised, it means that Christ is of no use to you at all. [3]Once more I warn any man who allows himself to be circumcised that he is obliged to obey the whole Law. [4]Those of you who try to be put right with God by obeying the Law have cut yourselves off from Christ. You are outside God's grace. [5]As for us, our hope is that God will put us right with him; and this is what we wait for, by the power of God's Spirit working through our faith. [6]For when we are in union with Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor the lack of it makes any difference at all; what matters is faith that works through love.

[7]You were doing so well! Who made you stop obeying the truth? How did he persuade you? [8]It was not done by God, who calls you. [9]"It takes only a little yeast to raise the whole batch of dough," as they say. [10]But I still feel sure about you. Our union in the Lord makes me confident that you will not take a different view, and that the man who is upsetting you, whoever he is, will be punished by God.

[11]But as for me, brothers, why am I still persecuted if I continue to preach that circumcision is necessary? If that were true, then my preaching about the cross of Christ would cause no trouble. [12]I wish that the people who are upsetting you would go all the way; let them go on and castrate themselves!

[13]As for you, my brothers, you were called to be free. But do not let this freedom become an excuse for

letting your physical desires rule you. Instead, let love make you serve one another. [14]For the whole Law is summed up in one commandment: "Love your fellowman as yourself." [15]But if you act like animals, hurting and harming each other, then watch out, or you will completely destroy one another.

The Spirit and Human Nature

[16]What I say is this: let the Spirit direct your lives, and do not satisfy the desires of the human nature. [17]For what our human nature wants is opposed to what the Spirit wants, and what the Spirit wants is opposed to what human nature wants. The two are enemies, and this means that you cannot do what you want to do. [18]If the Spirit leads you, then you are not subject to the Law.

[19]What human nature does is quite plain. It shows itself in immoral, filthy, and indecent actions; [20]in worship of idols and witchcraft. People become enemies, they fight, become jealous, angry, and ambitious. They separate into parties and groups; [21]they are envious, get drunk, have orgies, and do other things like these. I warn you now as I have before: those who do these things will not receive the Kingdom of God.

[22]But the Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23]humility, and self-control. There is no law against such things as these. [24]And those who belong to Christ Jesus have put to death their human nature, with all its passions and desires. [25]The Spirit has given us life; he must also control our lives. [26]We must not be proud, or irritate one another, or be jealous of one another.

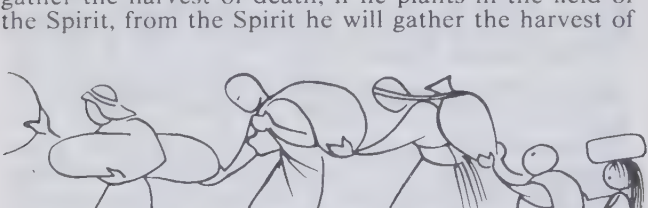
Bear One Another's Burdens

6 My brothers, if someone is caught in any kind of wrongdoing, those of you who are spiritual should set him right; but you must do it in a gentle way. And keep an eye on yourself, so that you will not be tempted, too. [2]Help carry one another's burdens, and in this way you will obey the law of Christ. [3]If someone thinks he is something, when he really is nothing, he is only fooling himself. [4]Each one should judge his own conduct for

himself. If it is good, then he can be proud of what he himself has done, without having to compare it with what someone else has done. [5]For everyone has to carry his own load.

[6]The man who is being taught the Christian message should share all the good things he has with his teacher.

[7]Do not deceive yourselves; no one makes a fool of God. A man will reap exactly what he plants. [8]If he plants in the field of his natural desires, from it he will gather the harvest of death; if he plants in the field of the Spirit, from the Spirit he will gather the harvest of



Do good to everyone

eternal life. [9]So let us not become tired of doing good; for if we do not give up, the time will come when we will reap the harvest. [10]So then, as often as we have the chance, we should do good to everyone, but especially to those who belong to our family in the faith.

Final Warning and Greeting

[11]See what big letters I make as I write to you now with my own hand! [12]Those who want to show off and brag about external matters are the ones who are trying to force you to be circumcised. They do it, however, only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. [13]Even those who practice circumcision do not obey the Law; they want you to be circumcised so they can boast that you submitted to this physical ceremony. [14]As for me, however, I will boast only of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; for by means of his cross the

world is dead to me, and I am dead to the world. [15]It does not matter at all whether or not one is circumcised. What does matter is being a new creature. [16]As for those who follow this rule in their lives, may peace and mercy be with them—with them and with all God's people!

[17]To conclude: let no one give me any more trouble, because the scars I have on my body show that I am the slave of Jesus.

[18]May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, my brothers. Amen.

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS

1 From Paul, who by God's will is an apostle of Christ Jesus—

To God's people who live in Ephesus, those who are faithful in their life in Christ Jesus:

[2]May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

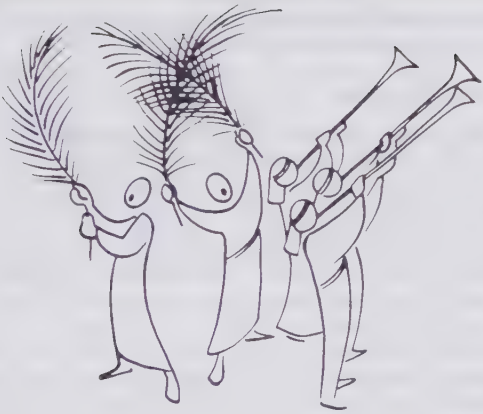
Spiritual Blessings in Christ

[3]Let us give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! For he has blessed us, in our union with Christ, by giving us every spiritual gift in the heavenly world. [4]Before the world was made, God had already chosen us to be his in Christ, so that we would be holy and without fault before him. Because of his love, [5]God had already decided that through Jesus Christ he would bring us to himself as his sons—this was his pleasure and purpose. [6]Let us praise God for his glorious grace, for the free gift he gave us in his dear Son!

[7]For by the death of Christ we are set free, that is, our sins are forgiven. How great is the grace of God, [8]which he gave to us in such large measure! In all his wisdom and insight [9]God did what he had purposed, and made known to us the secret plan he had already decided to complete by means of Christ. [10]God's plan, which he will complete when the time is right, is to bring all creation together, everything in heaven and on earth, with Christ as head.

[11]All things are done according to God's plan and decision; and God chose us to be his own people in union with Christ because of his own purpose, based on what he had decided from the very beginning. [12]Let us, then, who were the first to hope in Christ, praise God's glory!

[13]And so it was with you also: when you heard the true message, the Good News that brought you salvation, you believed in Christ, and God put his stamp of ownership on you by giving you the Holy Spirit he had



Let us praise his glory!

promised. [14]The Spirit is the guarantee that we shall receive what God has promised his people, and assures us that God will give complete freedom to those who are his. Let us praise his glory!

Paul's Prayer

[15]For this reason, ever since I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, [16]I have not stopped giving thanks to God for you. I remember you in my prayers, [17]and ask the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, to give you the Spirit, who will make you wise and reveal God to you, so that you will know him. [18]I ask that your minds may be opened to see his light, so that you will know what is the hope to which he has called you, how rich are the wonderful blessings he promises his people, [19]and how very great is his power at work in us who believe. This power in us is the same as the mighty strength [20]which he used when he raised Christ from death, and seated him at his right side in the heavenly world. [21]Christ rules there above all heavenly rulers, authorities, powers, and lords; he is above all titles of power in this world and in the next. [22]God put all things under Christ's feet, and

gave him to the church as supreme Lord over all things.
[23]The church is Christ's body, the completion of him
who himself completes all things everywhere.

From Death to Life

2 In the past you were spiritually dead because of your disobedience and sins. [2]At that time you followed the world's evil way; you obeyed the ruler of the spiritual powers in space, the spirit who now controls the people who disobey God. [3]Actually all of us were like them, and lived according to our natural desires, and did whatever suited the wishes of our own bodies and minds. Like everyone else, we too were naturally bound to suffer God's wrath.

[4]But God's mercy is so abundant, and his love for us is so great, [5]that while we were spiritually dead in our disobedience he brought us to life with Christ. It is by God's grace that you have been saved. [6]In our union with Christ Jesus he raised us up with him to rule with him in the heavenly world. [7]He did this to demonstrate for all time to come the extraordinary greatness of his grace in the love he showed us in Christ Jesus. [8]For it is by God's grace that you have been saved, through faith. It is not your own doing, but God's gift. [9]There is nothing here to boast of, since it is not the result of your own efforts. [10]God is our Maker, and in our union with Christ Jesus he has created us for a life of good works, which he has already prepared for us to do.

One in Christ

[11]You Gentiles by birth —who are called the uncircumcised by the Jews, who call themselves the circumcised (which refers to what men themselves do on their bodies)—remember what you were in the past. [12]At that time you were apart from Christ. You were foreigners, and did not belong to God's chosen people. You had no part in the covenants, which were based on God's promises to his people. You lived in this world without hope and without God. [13]But now, in union with Christ Jesus, you who used to be far away have been brought near by the death of Christ. [14]For Christ himself has brought us peace, by making the Jews and Gentiles one people.

With his own body he broke down the wall that separated them and kept them enemies. [15]He abolished the Jewish Law, with its commandments and rules, in order to create out of the two races one new people in union with himself, in this way making peace. [16]By his death on the cross Christ destroyed the enmity; by means of the cross he united both races into one body and brought them back to God. [17]So Christ came and preached the Good News of peace to all—to you Gentiles, who were far away from God, and to the Jews, who were near to him. [18]It is through Christ that all of us, Jews and Gentiles, are able to come in the one Spirit into the presence of the Father.

[19]So then, you Gentiles are not foreigners or strangers any longer; you are now fellow-citizens with God's people, and members of the family of God. [20]You, too, are built upon the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets, the cornerstone being Christ Jesus himself. [21]He is the one who holds the whole building together and makes it grow into a sacred temple in the Lord. [22]In union with him you too are being built together with all the others into a house where God lives through his Spirit.

Paul's Work for the Gentiles

3 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles, pray to God. [2]Surely you have heard that God, in his grace, has given me this work to do for your good. [3]God revealed his secret plan and made it known to me. (I have written briefly about this, [4]and if you will read what I have written you can learn my understanding of the secret of Christ.) [5]In past times men were not told this secret, but God has revealed it now by the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets. [6]The secret is this: by means of the gospel the Gentiles have a part with the Jews in God's blessings; they are members of the same body, and share in the promise that God made in Christ Jesus.

[7]I was made a servant of the gospel by God's special gift, which he gave me through the working of his power. [8]I am less than the least of all God's people; yet God gave me this privilege of taking to the Gentiles the

Good News of the infinite riches of Christ, [9]and to make all men see how God's secret plan is to be put into effect. God, who is the Creator of all things, kept his secret hidden through all the past ages, [10]in order that at the present time, by means of the church, the angelic rulers and powers in the heavenly world might know God's wisdom, in all its different forms. [11]God did this according to his eternal purpose, which he achieved through Christ Jesus our Lord. [12]In union with him, and through our faith in him, we have the freedom to enter into God's presence with all confidence. [13]I beg you, then, do not be discouraged because I am suffering for you; it is all for your benefit.

The Love of Christ

[14]For this reason, then, I fall on my knees before the Father, [15]from whom every family in heaven and on earth receives its true name. [16]I ask God, from the wealth of his glory, to give you power through his Spirit to be strong in your inner selves, [17]and that Christ will make his home in your hearts, through faith. I pray that you may have your roots and foundations in love, [18]so that you, together with all God's people, may have the power to understand how broad and long and high and deep is Christ's love. [19]Yes, may you come to know his love—although it can never be fully known –and so be completely filled with the perfect fulness of God.

[20]To him who is able to do so much more than we can ever ask for, or even think of, by means of the power working in us: [21]to God be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus, for all time, forever and ever! Amen.

The Unity of the Body

4 I urge you, then—I who am a prisoner because I serve the Lord: live a life that measures up to the standard God set when he called you. [2]Be humble, gentle, and patient always. Show your love by being helpful to one another. [3]Do your best to preserve the unity which the Spirit gives, by the peace that binds you together. [4]There is one body and one Spirit, just as there is one hope to which God has called you. [5]There is one

Lord, one faith, one baptism; [6]there is one God and Father of all men, who is Lord of all, works through all, and is in all.

[7]Each one of us has been given a special gift, in proportion to what Christ has given. [8]As the scripture says,

"When he went up to the very heights
he took many captives with him;
he gave gifts to men."

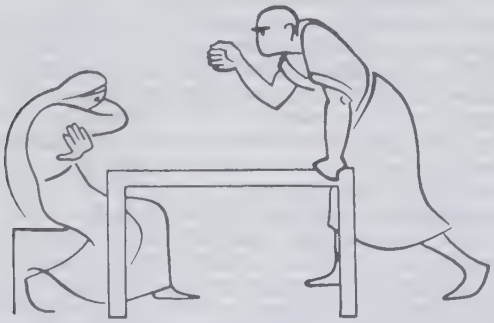
[9]Now, what does "he went up" mean? It means that first he came down—that is, down to the lower depths of the earth. [10]So he who came down is the same one who went up, above and beyond the heavens, to fill the whole universe with his presence. [11]It was he who "gave gifts to men"; he appointed some to be apostles, others to be prophets, others to be evangelists, others to be pastors and teachers. [12]He did this to prepare all God's people for the work of Christian service, to build up the body of Christ. [13]And so we shall all come together to that oneness in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God; we shall become mature men, reaching to the very height of Christ's full stature. [14]Then we shall no longer be children, carried by the waves and blown about by every shifting wind of the teaching of deceitful men, who lead others to error by the tricks they invent. [15]Instead, by speaking the truth in a spirit of love, we must grow up in every way to Christ, who is the head. [16]Under his control all the different parts of the body fit together, and the whole body is held together by every joint with which it is provided. So when each separate part works as it should, the whole body grows and builds itself up through love.

The New Life in Christ

[17]In the Lord's name, then, I say this and warn you: do not live any longer like the heathen, whose thoughts are worthless, [18]and whose minds are in the dark. They have no part in the life that God gives, because they are completely ignorant and stubborn. [19]They have lost all feeling of shame; they give themselves over to vice, and do all sorts of indecent things without restraint.

[20]That was not what you learned about Christ! [21]You certainly heard about him, and as his followers you were

taught the truth that is in Jesus. [22]So get rid of your old self, which made you live as you used to—the old self that was being destroyed by its deceitful desires. [23]Your hearts and minds must be made completely new. [24]You must put on the new self, which is created in God's likeness, and reveals itself in the true life that is upright and holy.



Do not use harmful words

[25]No more lying, then! Everyone must tell the truth to his brother, because we are all members together in the body of Christ. [26]If you become angry, do not let your anger lead you into sin; and do not stay angry all day. [27]Don't give the Devil a chance. [28]The man who used to rob must stop robbing and start working, to earn an honest living for himself, and to be able to help the poor. [29]Do not use harmful words in talking. Use only helpful words, the kind that build up and provide what is needed, so that what you say will do good to those who hear you. [30]And do not make God's Holy Spirit sad; for the Spirit is God's mark of ownership on you, a guarantee that the Day will come when God will set you free. [31]Get rid of all bitterness, passion, and anger. No more shouting or insults. No more hateful feelings of any sort. [32]Instead, be kind and tender-hearted to one another, and forgive one another, as God has forgiven you in Christ.

Get rid of all bitterness

Living in the Light

5 Since you are God's dear children, you must try to be like him. [2]Your life must be controlled by love, just as Christ loved us and gave his life for us, as a sweet-smelling offering and sacrifice that pleases God.

[3]Since you are God's people, it is not right that any questions of immorality, or indecency, or greed should even be mentioned among you. [4]Nor is it fitting for you to use obscene, foolish, or dirty words. Rather you should give thanks to God. [5]You may be sure of this: no man who is immoral, indecent, or greedy (for greediness is a form of idol worship) will ever receive a share in the Kingdom of Christ and of God.

[6]Do not let anyone deceive you with foolish words; it is because of these very things that God's wrath will come upon those who do not obey him. [7]So have nothing at all to do with such people. [8]You yourselves used to be in the darkness, but since you have become the Lord's people you are in the light. So you must live like people who belong to the light. [9]For it is the light that brings a rich harvest of every kind of goodness, righteousness, and truth. [10]Try to learn what pleases

the Lord. [11]Have nothing to do with the worthless
things that people do, that belong to the darkness. In-
stead, bring them out to the light. [12](It is really too
shameful even to talk about the things they do in se-
cret.) [13]And when all things are brought out to the
light, then their true nature is clearly revealed; [14]for
anything that is clearly revealed becomes light. That is
why it is said,

"Wake up, sleeper,
and rise from the dead!
And Christ will shine on you."

[15]So pay close attention to how you live. Don't live
like ignorant men, but like wise men. [16]Make good use
of every opportunity you get, because these are bad
days. [17]Don't be fools, then, but try to find out what
the Lord wants you to do.

[18]Do not get drunk with wine, which will only ruin
you; instead, be filled with the Spirit. [19]Speak to one

Always give thanks

another in the words of psalms, hymns, and sacred
songs; sing hymns and psalms to the Lord, with praise
in your hearts. [20]Always give thanks for everything to
God the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wives and Husbands

[21]Submit yourselves to one another, because of your reverence for Christ.

[22]Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as to the Lord. [23]For a husband has authority over his wife in the same way that Christ has authority over the church; and Christ is himself the Savior of the church, his body. [24]And so wives must submit themselves completely to their husbands, in the same way that the church submits itself to Christ.

[25]Husbands, love your wives in the same way that Christ loved the church and gave his life for it. [26]He did this to dedicate the church to God, by his word, after making it clean by the washing in water, [27]in order to present the church to himself, in all its beauty, pure and faultless, without spot or wrinkle, or any other imperfection. [28]Men ought to love their wives just as they love their own bodies. A man who loves his wife loves himself. [29](No one ever hates his own body. Instead, he feeds it and takes care of it, just as Christ does the church; [30]for we are members of his body.) [31]As the scripture says, "For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother, and unite with his wife, and the two will become one." [32]There is a great truth revealed in this scripture, and I understand it applies to Christ and the church. [33]But it also applies to you: every husband must love his wife as himself, and every wife must respect her husband.

Children and Parents

6 Children, it is your Christian duty to obey your parents, for this is the right thing to do. [2]"Honor your father and mother" is the first commandment that has a promise added: [3]"so that all may be well with you, and you may live a long time in the land."

[4]Parents, do not treat your children in such a way as to make them angry. Instead, raise them with Christian discipline and instruction.

Slaves and Masters

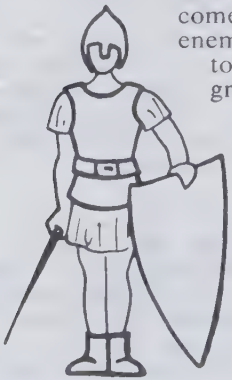
[5]Slaves, obey your human masters, with fear and trembling; and do it with a sincere heart, as though you

were serving Christ. 6Do this not only when they are watching you, to gain their approval; but with all your heart do what God wants, as slaves of Christ. 7Do your work as slaves cheerfully, then, as though you served the Lord, and not merely men. 8Remember that the Lord will reward every man, whether slave or free, for the good work he does.

9Masters, behave in the same way toward your slaves; and stop using threats. Remember that you and your slaves belong to the same Master in heaven, who judges everyone by the same standard.

The Whole Armor of God

10Finally, build up your strength in union with the Lord, and by means of his mighty power. 11Put on all the armor that God gives you, so that you will stand up against the Devil's evil tricks. 12For we are not fighting against human beings, but against the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world, the rulers, authorities, and cosmic powers of this dark age. 13So take up God's armor now! Then when the evil day comes, you will be able to resist the enemy's attacks, and after fighting to the end, you will still hold your ground.



Put on all the armor

14So stand ready: have truth for a belt tight around your waist; put on righteousness for your breastplate, 15and the readiness to announce the Good News of peace as shoes for your feet. 16At all times carry faith as a shield; with it you will be able to put out all the burning arrows shot by the Evil One. 17And accept salvation for a helmet, and the word of God as the sword that the Spirit gives you. 18Do all this in prayer, asking for God's help. Pray on every occasion, as the Spirit leads. For this reason keep alert and never give up; pray always for all God's people.

[19]And pray also for me, that God will give me a message,
when I am ready to speak, that I may speak boldly and
make known the gospel's secret. [20]For the sake of this
gospel I am an ambassador, though now I am in prison.
Pray that I may be bold in speaking of it, as I should.

Final Greetings

[21]Tychicus, our dear brother and faithful servant in
the Lord's work, will give you all the news about me,
so that you may know how I am getting along. [22]That
is why I am sending him to you—to tell you how
all of us are getting along, and so bring courage to your
hearts.

[23]May God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give
peace and love to all the brothers, with faith. [24]May
God's grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus
Christ with undying love.

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

1 From Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus—
To all God's people living in Philippi who are in union with Christ Jesus, and to the church leaders and helpers:
2 May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Paul's Prayer for His Readers

3 I thank my God for you every time I think of you;
4 and every time I pray for you all, I pray with joy,
5 because of the way in which you have helped me in the work of the gospel, from the very first day until now.
6 And so I am sure of this: that God, who began this good work in you, will carry it on until it is finished in the Day of Christ Jesus. 7 You are always in my heart! And so it is only right for me to feel this way about you. For you have all shared with me in this privilege that God has given me, both now that I am in prison and also while I was free to defend and firmly establish the gospel.
8 God knows that I tell the truth when I say that my deep feeling for you all comes from the heart of Christ Jesus himself.
9 This is my prayer for you: I pray that your love will keep on growing more and more, together with true knowledge and perfect judgment,
10 so that you will be able to choose what is best. Then you will be free from all impurity and blame on the Day of Christ.
11 Your lives will be filled with the truly good qualities which Jesus Christ alone can produce, for the glory and praise of God.

To Live Is Christ

12 I want you to know, my brothers, that the things that have happened to me have really helped the progress of the gospel.
13 As a result, the whole palace guard and all the others here know that I am in prison because I am a servant of Christ.
14 And my being in prison has

given most of the brothers more confidence in the Lord, so that they grow bolder all the time in preaching the message without fear.

[15]Of course some of them preach Christ because they are jealous and quarrelsome, but others preach him with all good will. [16]These do so from love, because they know that God has given me the work of defending the gospel. [17]The others do not proclaim Christ sincerely, but from a spirit of selfish ambition; they think that they will make more trouble for me while I am in prison.

[18]It does not matter! I am happy about it—just so Christ is preached in every way possible, whether from wrong or right motives. And I will continue to be happy. [19]because I know that by means of your prayers and the help which comes from the Spirit of Jesus Christ, I shall be set free. [20]My deep desire and hope is that I shall never fail my duty, but that at all times, and especially right now, I shall be full of courage, so that with my whole being I shall bring honor to Christ, whether I live or die. [21]For what is life? To me, it is Christ. Death, then, will bring more. [22]But if by living on I can do more worthwhile work, then I am not sure which I should choose. [23]I am caught from both sides. I want very much to leave this life and be with Christ, which is a far better thing; [24]but it is much more important, for your sake, that I remain alive. [25]I am sure of this, and so I know that I will stay. I will stay on with you all, to add to your progress and joy in the faith. [26]So when I am with you again you will have even more reason to be proud of me, in your life in Christ Jesus.

[27]Now, the important thing is that your manner of life be as the gospel of Christ requires, so that, whether or not I am able to go to see you, I will hear that you stand firm with one common purpose, and fight together, with only one wish, for the faith of the gospel. [28]Don't be afraid of your enemies; always be courageous, and this will prove to them that they will lose, and that you will win, because it is God who gives you the victory. [29]For you have been given the privilege of serving Christ, not only by believing in him, but also by suffering for him. [30]Now you can take

part with me in the fight. It is the same one you saw me fighting in the past and the same one I am still fighting, as you hear.

Christ's Humility and Greatness

2 Does your life in Christ make you strong? Does his love comfort you? Do you have fellowship with the Spirit? Do you feel kindness and compassion for one another? [2]I urge you, then, make me completely happy by having the same thoughts, sharing the same love, and being one in soul and mind. [3]Don't do anything from selfish ambition, or from a cheap desire to boast; but be humble toward each other, never thinking you are better than others. [4]And look out for each other's interests, not just for your own. [5]The attitude you should have is the one that Christ Jesus had:

[6] He always had the very nature of God,
but he did not think that by force he
should try to become equal with God.
[7] Instead, of his own free will he gave it all
up,
and took the nature of a servant.
He became like man,
and appeared in human likeness.
[8] He was humble and walked the path of
obedience to death—
his death on the cross.
[9] For this reason God raised him to the
highest place above,
and gave him the name that is greater
than any other name.
[10] And so, in honor of the name of Jesus,
all beings in heaven, on earth, and in the
world below
will fall on their knees,
[11] and all will openly proclaim that Jesus
Christ is the Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Shining as Lights in the World

[12]So then, dear friends, as you always obeyed me when I was with you, it is even more important that you

obey me now, while I am away from you. Keep on working, with fear and trembling, to complete your salvation, [13]because God is always at work in you to make you willing and able to obey his own purpose.

[14]Do everything without complaining or arguing, [15]so that you may be innocent and pure, as God's perfect children who live in a world of corrupt and sinful people. You must shine among them like stars lighting up the sky, [16]as you offer them the message of life. If you do so, I shall have reason to be proud of you on the Day of Christ, because it will show that all my effort and work have not been wasted.

[17]Perhaps my life's blood is to be poured out like an offering on the sacrifice that your faith offers to God. If that is so, I am glad, and share my joy with you all. [18]In the same way, you too must be glad and share your joy with me.

Timothy and Epaphroditus

[19]I trust in the Lord Jesus that I will be able to send Timothy to you soon, so that I may be encouraged by news of you. [20]He is the only one who shares my feelings, and who really cares about you. [21]Everyone else is concerned only about his own affairs, not about the cause of Jesus Christ. [22]And you yourselves know how he has proved his worth, how he and I, like a son and his father, have worked together for the sake of the gospel. [23]I hope to send him to you, then, as soon as I know how things are going to turn out for me. [24]And I trust in the Lord that I myself will be able to come to you soon.

[25]I have thought it necessary to send you our brother Epaphroditus, who has worked and fought by my side, and who has served as your messenger in helping me. [26]He is anxious to see you all, and is very upset because you heard that he was sick. [27]Indeed he was sick, and almost died. But God had pity on him, and not only on him but on me, too, and spared me even greater sorrow. [28]I am all the more eager, then, to send him to you, so that you will be glad again when you see him, and my own sorrow will disappear. [29]Receive him, then, with all joy, as a brother in the Lord. Show respect to all such men as he, [30]because he risked his life and nearly died,

Receive him, then, with all joy

for the sake of the work of Christ, in order to give me the help that you yourselves could not give.

The True Righteousness

3 In conclusion, my brothers, may the Lord give you much joy. It doesn't bother me to repeat what I have written before, and it will add to your safety.
[2]Watch out for those who do evil things, those dogs, men who insist on cutting the body. [3]For we, not they, are the ones who have received the true circumcision, because we worship God by his Spirit, and rejoice in our life in Christ Jesus. We do not put any trust in external ceremonies. [4]I could, of course, put my trust in such things. If anyone thinks he can trust in external ceremonies, I have even more reason to feel that way. [5]I was circumcised when I was a week old. I am an Israelite by birth, of the tribe of Benjamin, a pure-blooded Hebrew. So far as keeping the Jewish Law is concerned, I was a Pharisee, [6]and I was so zealous that I persecuted the church. So far as a man can be righteous by obeying the commands of the Law, I was without fault. [7]But all those things that I might count as profit I now reckon as loss, for Christ's sake. [8]Not only those things; I reckon everything as complete loss for the sake of what is so much more valuable, the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.

For his sake I have thrown everything away; I consider it all as mere garbage, so that I might gain Christ, [9]and be completely united with him. No longer do I have a righteousness of my own, the kind to be gained by obeying the Law. I now have the righteousness that is given through faith in Christ, the righteousness that comes from God, and is based on faith. [10]All I want is to know Christ and to experience the power of his resurrection; to share in his sufferings and become like him in his death, [11]in the hope that I myself will be raised from death to life.

Running toward the Goal

[12]I do not claim that I have already succeeded or have already become perfect. I keep going on to try to win the prize for which Christ Jesus has already won me to himself. [13]Of course, brothers, I really do not think that I have already won it; the one thing I do, however, is to forget what is behind me and do my best to reach what is ahead. [14]So I run straight toward the goal in order to win the prize, which is God's call through Christ Jesus to the life above.

I run straight toward the goal

[15]All of us who are spiritually mature should have this same attitude. If, however, some of you have a different attitude, God will make this clear to you. [16]However

that may be, let us go forward according to the same rules we have followed until now.

17 Keep on imitating me, my brothers. We have set the right example for you, so pay attention to those who follow it. 18 I have told you this many times before, and now I repeat it, with tears: there are many whose lives make them enemies of Christ's death on the cross. 19 They are going to end up in hell, because their god is their bodily desires, they are proud of what they should be ashamed of, and they think only of things that belong to this world. 20 We, however, are citizens of heaven, and we eagerly wait for our Savior to come from heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ. 21 He will change our weak mortal bodies and make them like his own glorious body, using that power by which he is able to bring all things under his rule.

Instructions

4 So, then, my brothers—and how dear you are to me, and how I miss you! how happy you make me, and how proud I am of you!—this, dear brothers, is how you should stand firm in your life in the Lord.

2 Euodia and Syntyche, please, I beg you, try to agree as sisters in the Lord. 3 And you too, my faithful partner, I want you to help these women; for they have worked hard with me to spread the gospel, together with Clement and all my other fellow workers, whose names are in God's book of the living.

4 May you always be joyful in your life in the Lord. I say it again: rejoice!

5 Show a gentle attitude toward all. The Lord is coming soon. 6 Don't worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart. 7 And God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe, in union with Christ Jesus.

8 In conclusion, my brothers, fill your minds with those things that are good and deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and honorable. 9 Put into practice what you learned and received from me, both from my words and from my deeds. And the God who gives us peace will be with you.

Their god is their bodily desires

Thanks for the Gift

[10]How great is the joy I have in my life in the Lord! After so long a time, you once more had the chance of showing that you care for me. I don't mean that you had quit caring for me—you did not have a chance to show it. [11]And I am not saying this because I feel neglected; for I have learned to be satisfied with what I have. [12]I know what it is to be in need, and what it is to have more than enough. I have learned this secret, so that anywhere, at any time, I am content, whether I am full or hungry, whether I have too much or too little. [13]I have the strength to face all conditions by the power that Christ gives me.

[14]But it was very good of you to help me in my troubles. [15]You Philippians yourselves know very well that when I left Macedonia, in the early days of preaching the Good News, you were the only church to help me; you were the only ones who shared my profits and losses. [16]More than once, when I needed help in Thessalonica, you sent it to me. [17]It is not that I just want to receive gifts; rather, I want to see profit added to your account. [18]Here, then, is my receipt for

everything you have given me and it has been more than enough! I have all I need, now that Epaphroditus has brought me all your gifts. These are like a sweet-smelling offering to God, a sacrifice which is acceptable and pleasing to him. [19]And my God, with all his abundant wealth in Christ Jesus, will supply all your needs. [20]To our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Final Greetings

[21]Greetings to all God's people who belong to Christ Jesus. The brothers here with me send you their greetings. [22]All God's people here send greetings, especially those who belong to the Emperor's palace.

[23]May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS

1 From Paul, who by God's will is an apostle of Christ Jesus, and from our brother Timothy –

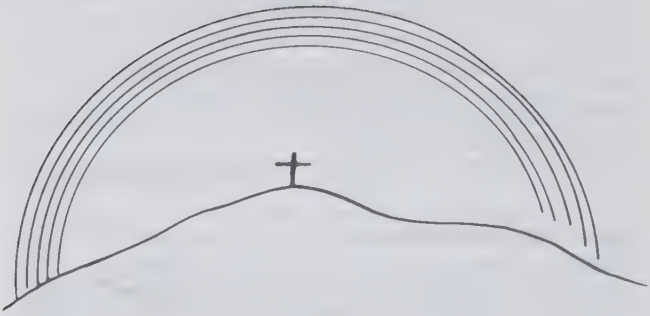
[2]To God's people in Colossae, those who are our faithful brothers in Christ:

May God our Father give you grace and peace.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

[3]We always give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you. [4]For we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of your love for all God's people. [5]When the true message, the Good News, first came to you, you heard of the hope it offers. So your faith and love are based on what you hope for, which is kept safe for you in heaven. [6]The gospel is bringing blessings and spreading through the whole world, just as it has among you ever since the day you first heard of the grace of God and came to know it as it really is. [7]You learned this from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful worker for Christ on our behalf. [8]He told us of the love that the Spirit has given you.

[9]For this reason we always pray for you, ever since we heard about you. We ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will, with all the wisdom and understanding that his Spirit gives. [10]Then you will be able to live as the Lord wants, and always do what pleases him. Your lives will be fruitful in all kinds of good works, and you will grow in your knowledge of God. [11]May you be made strong with all the strength which comes from his glorious might, so that you may be able to endure everything with patience. [12]And give thanks, with joy, to the Father, who has made you fit to have your share of what God has reserved for his people in the kingdom of light. [13]He rescued us from the power of darkness and brought us safe into the kingdom of his dear Son, [14]by whom we are set free, that is, our sins are forgiven.



He rescued us from the power of darkness

The Person and Work of Christ

15 Christ is the visible likeness of the invisible God. He
is the firstborn Son, superior to all created things. 16 For
by him God created everything in heaven and on earth,
the seen and the unseen things, including spiritual pow-
ers, lords, rulers, and authorities. God created the whole
universe through him and for him. 17 He existed before
all things, and in union with him all things have their
proper place. 18 He is the head of his body, the church;
he is the source of the body's life; he is the firstborn Son
who was raised from death, in order that he alone might
have the first place in all things. 19 For it was by God's
own decision that the Son has in himself the full nature
of God. 20 Through the Son, then, God decided to bring
the whole universe back to himself. God made peace
through his Son's death on the cross, and so brought
back to himself all things, both on earth and in heaven.

21 At one time you were far away from God and
were his enemies because of the evil things you did
and thought. 22 But now, by means of the physical
death of his Son, God has made you his friends, in
order to bring you, holy, pure, and faultless, into his
presence. 23 You must, of course, continue faithful on a
firm and sure foundation, and not allow yourselves to

be shaken from the hope you gained when you heard the gospel. It is of this gospel that I, Paul, became a servant—this gospel which has been preached to everybody in the world.

Paul's Ministry to the Church

[24]And now I am happy about my sufferings for you. For by means of my physical sufferings I help complete what still remains of Christ's sufferings on behalf of his body, which is the church. [25]And I have been made a servant of the church by God, who gave me this task to perform for your good. It is the task of fully proclaiming his message, [26]which is the secret he hid through all past ages from all mankind, but has now revealed to his people. [27]God's plan is this: to make known his secret to his people, this rich and glorious secret which he has for all peoples. And the secret is this: Christ is in you, which means that you will share the glory of God. [28]So we preach Christ to all men. We warn and teach everyone, with all possible wisdom, in order to bring each one into God's presence as a mature individual in union with Christ. [29]To get this done I toil and struggle, using the mighty strength that Christ supplies, which is at work in me.

2 Let me tell you how hard I have worked for you, and for the people in Laodicea, and for all those who do not know me personally. [2]I do so that their hearts may be filled with courage, and that they may be drawn together in love and have the full wealth of assurance which true understanding brings. And so they will know God's secret, which is Christ himself. [3]He is the key that opens all the hidden treasures of God's wisdom and knowledge.

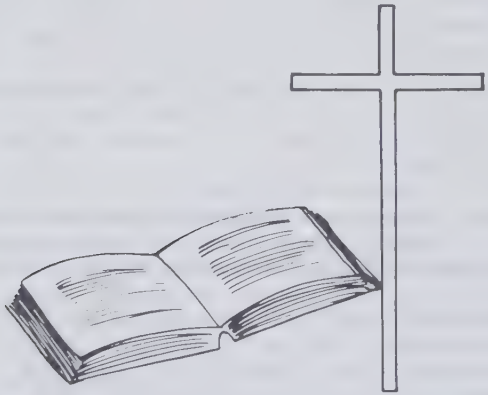
[4]I tell you, then, do not let anyone fool you with false arguments, no matter how good they seem to be. [5]For even though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, and I am glad as I see the resolute firmness with which you stand together in your faith in Christ.

Fulness of Life in Christ

[6]Since you have accepted Christ Jesus as Lord, live in union with him. [7]Keep your roots deep in him, build

your lives on him, and become ever stronger in your faith, as you were taught. And be filled with thanksgiving.

[8]See to it, then, that no one makes a captive of you with the worthless deceit of human wisdom, which comes from the teachings handed down by men, and from the ruling spirits of the universe, and not from Christ. [9]For the full content of divine nature lives in Christ, in his humanity, [10]and you have been given full life in union with him. He is supreme over every spiritual ruler and authority.



He canceled the unfavorable record

[11]In union with him you were circumcised, not with the circumcision that is made by men, but with Christ's own circumcision, which consists of being freed from the power of this sinful body. [12]For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ through your faith in the active power of God, who raised him from death. [13]You were at one time spiritually dead because of your sins, and because you were Gentiles without the Law. But God has now brought you to life with Christ; God forgave us all our sins. [14]He canceled the unfavorable record of our debts, with its binding rules, and did away with it completely by nailing it to the cross. [15]And on that cross Christ freed himself from

the power of the spiritual rulers and authorities; he made a public spectacle of them by leading them as captives in his victory procession.

[16]So let no one make rules about what you eat or drink, or about the subject of holy days, or the new moon festival, or the Sabbath. [17]All such things are only a shadow of things in the future; the reality is Christ. [18]Do not allow yourselves to be condemned by anyone who claims to be superior because of special visions, and insists on false humility and the worship of angels. Such a person is all puffed up, for no reason at all, by his human way of thinking, [19]and has stopped holding on to Christ, who is the head. Under Christ's control the whole body is nourished and held together by its joints and ligaments, and grows as God wants it to grow.

Dying and Living with Christ

[20]You have died with Christ and are set free from the ruling spirits of the universe. Why, then, do you live as though you belonged to this world? Why do you obey such rules as [21]"Don't handle this," "Don't taste that," "Don't touch the other"? [22]All these things become useless, once they are used. They are only man-made rules and teachings. [23]Of course they appear to have wisdom in their forced worship of angels, and false humility, and severe treatment of the body; but they have no real value in controlling physical passions.

3 You have been raised to life with Christ. Set your hearts, then, on the things that are in heaven, where Christ sits on his throne at the right side of God. [2]Keep your minds fixed on things there, not on things here on earth. [3]For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. [4]Your real life is Christ, and when he appears, then you too will appear with him and share his glory!

The Old Life and the New

[5]You must put to death, then, the earthly desires at work in you, such as immorality, indecency, lust, evil passions, and greed (for greediness is a form of idol worship). [6]Because of such things God's wrath will

come upon those who do not obey him. [7]And you yourselves at one time used to live according to such desires, when your life was dominated by them.

[8]But now you must get rid of all these things: anger, passion, and hateful feelings. No insults or obscene talk must ever come from your lips. [9]Do not lie to one another, because you have put off the old self with its habits, [10]and have put on the new self. This is the new man which God, its creator, is constantly renewing in his own image, to bring you to a full knowledge of himself. [11]As a result, there are no Gentiles and Jews, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarians, savages, slaves, or free men, but Christ is all, Christ is in all.

[12]You are the people of God; he loved you and chose you for his own. So then, you must put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. [13]Be helpful to one another, and forgive one another, whenever any of you has a complaint against someone else. You must forgive each other in the same way that the Lord has forgiven you. [14]And to all these add love, which binds all things together in perfect unity. [15]The peace that Christ gives is to be the judge in your hearts; for to this peace God has called you together in the one body. And be thankful. [16]Christ's message, in all its richness, must live in your hearts. Teach and instruct each other with all wisdom. Sing psalms, hymns, and sacred songs; sing to God, with thanksgiving in your hearts. [17]Everything you do or say, then, should be done in the name of the Lord Jesus, as you give thanks through him to God the Father.

Personal Relations in the New Life

[18]Wives, be obedient to your husbands, for that is what you should do as Christians.

[19]Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.

[20]Children, it is your Christian duty to obey your parents always, for that is what pleases God.

[21]Parents, do not irritate your children, so that they will become discouraged.

[22]Slaves, obey your human masters in all things, and do it not only when they are watching you, just to gain

their approval, but do it with a sincere heart, because of your reverence for the Lord. [23]Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as though you were working for the Lord, and not for men. [24]Remember that the Lord will reward you; you will receive what he has kept for his people. For Christ is the real Master you serve. [25]And the wrongdoer, whoever he is, will be paid for the wrong things he does; for God judges everyone by the same standard.

4 Masters, be right and fair in the way you treat your slaves. Remember that you too have a Master in heaven.

Instructions

[2]Be persistent in prayer, and keep alert as you pray, with thanks to God. [3]At the same time pray also for us, so that God will give us a good opportunity to preach his message, to tell the secret of Christ. For that is why I am now in prison. [4]Pray, then, that I may speak in such a way as to make it clear, as I should.

[5]Be wise in the way you act toward those who are not believers, making good use of every opportunity you have. [6]Your speech should always be pleasant and interesting, and you should know how to give the right answer to everyone.

Final Greetings

[7]Our dear brother Tychicus, who is a faithful worker and fellow servant in the Lord's work, will give you all the news about me. [8]That is why I am sending him to you, to cheer you up by telling you how all of us are getting along. [9]With him goes Onesimus, the dear and faithful brother, who belongs to your group. They will tell you everything that is happening here.

[10]Aristarchus, who is in prison with me, sends you greetings, and so does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have already received instructions about him, to welcome him if he comes your way.) [11]Joshua, called Justus, also sends greetings. These three are the only Jewish converts who work with me for the Kingdom of God, and they have been a great help to me.

12 Greetings from Epaphras, another member of your
group, and a servant of Christ Jesus. He always prays
fervently for you, asking God to make you stand firm,
mature, and fully convinced, in complete obedience to
his will. 13 I can personally testify to his hard work for
you, and for the people in Laodicea and Hierapolis.
14 Luke, our dear doctor, and Demas send you their
greetings.

15 Give our best wishes to the brothers in Laodicea,
and to Nympha and the church that meets in her
house. 16 After you read this letter, make sure that it is
read also in the church at Laodicea. At the same time,
you are to read the letter Laodicea will send you.
17 And tell Archippus, "Be sure to finish the task you
were given in the Lord's service."

18 With my own hand I write this: *Greetings from Paul.* Do not forget my chains!

May God's grace be with you.

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

1 From Paul, Silas, and Timothy—
To the people of the church in Thessalonica, who belong to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
May grace and peace be yours.

The Life and Faith of the Thessalonians

[2]We always thank God for you all, and always mention you in our prayers. [3]For we remember before our God and Father how you put your faith into practice, how your love made you work so hard, and how your hope in our Lord Jesus Christ is firm. [4]We know, brothers, that God loves you and has chosen you to be his own. [5]For we brought the Good News to you, not with words only, but also with power and the Holy Spirit, and with complete conviction of its truth. You know how we lived when we were with you; it was for your own good. [6]You imitated us and the Lord; and even though you suffered much, you received the message with the joy that comes from the Holy Spirit. [7]So you became an example to all believers in Macedonia and Greece. [8]For the message about the Lord went out from you not only to Macedonia and Greece, but the news of your faith in God has gone everywhere. There is nothing, then, that we need to say. [9]All those people speak of how you received us when we visited you, and how you turned away from idols to God, to serve the true and living God

You turned away from idols

10 and to wait for his Son to come from heaven—his Son
Jesus, whom he raised from death, and who rescues us
from God's wrath that is to come.

Paul's Work in Thessalonica

2 You yourselves know, brothers, that our visit to you
was not a failure. 2 You know how we had already
been mistreated and insulted in Philippi before we came
to you in Thessalonica. Yet our God gave us courage to
tell you the Good News that comes from him, even
though there was much opposition. 3 The appeal we
make to you is not based on error or impure motives, nor
do we try to trick anyone. 4 Instead, we always speak as
God wants us to, because he approved us and entrusted
the Good News to us. We do not try to please men, but
to please God, who tests our motives. 5 You know very
well that we did not come to you with flattering talk, nor
did we use words to cover up greed – God is our wit-
ness! 6 We did not try to get praise from anyone, either
from you or from others, 7 even though we could have
made demands on you as apostles of Christ. But we were
gentle when we were with you, as gentle as a mother
taking care of her children. 8 Because of our love for you
we were ready to share with you not only the Good
News from God but even our own lives. You were so
dear to us! 9 Surely you remember, brothers, how we
worked and toiled! We worked day and night so we
would not be any trouble to you as we preached to you
the Good News from God.

10 You are our witnesses, and so is God: our conduct
toward you who believe was pure, right, and without
fault. 11 You know that we treated each one of you just
as a father treats his own children. 12 We encouraged
you, we comforted you, and we kept urging you to live
the kind of life that pleases God, who calls you to
share his own Kingdom and glory.

13 And for this other reason, also, we always give
thanks to God. When we brought you God's message,
you heard it and accepted it, not as man's message but
as God's message, which indeed it is. For God is at
work in you who believe. 14 You, my brothers, had the
same things happen to you that happened to the

churches of God in Judea, to the people there who belong to Christ Jesus. You suffered the same persecutions from your own countrymen that they suffered from the Jews, [15]who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and persecuted us. How displeasing they are to God! How hostile they are to all men! [16]They even tried to stop us from preaching to the Gentiles the message that would bring them salvation. This is the last full measure of the sins they have always committed. And now God's wrath has at last fallen upon them!

Paul's Desire to Visit Them Again

[17]As for us, brothers, when we were separated from you for a little while—not in our thoughts, of course, but only in body—how we missed you and how hard we tried to see you again! [18]We wanted to go back to you. I, Paul, tried to go back more than once, but Satan would not let us. [19]After all, it is you—you, no less than others! —who are our hope, our joy, and our reason for boasting of our victory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes. [20]Indeed, you are our pride and our joy!

3 Finally, we could not bear it any longer. So we decided to stay on alone in Athens [2]while we sent Timothy, our brother who works with us for God in preaching the Good News about Christ. We sent him to strengthen you and help your faith, [3]so that none of you should turn back because of these persecutions. You yourselves know that such persecutions are part of God's will for us. [4]For while we were still with you, we told you ahead of time that we were going to be persecuted; and, as you well know, that is exactly what happened. [5]That is why I had to send Timothy. I could not bear it any longer, so I sent him to find out about your faith. Surely it could not be that the Devil had tempted you, and all our work had been for nothing!

[6]Now Timothy has come back to us from you, and he has brought the welcome news about your faith and love. He has told us that you always think well of us, and that you want to see us just as much as we want to see you. [7]So, in all our trouble and suffering we have been

encouraged about you, brothers. It was your faith that encouraged us, [8]because now we really live if you stand firm in your life in the Lord. [9]Now we can give thanks to God for you. We thank him for the joy we have before our God because of you. [10]Day and night we ask him with all our heart to let us see you personally and supply what is needed in your faith.

[11]May our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, prepare the way for us to come to you! [12]May the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow more and more and become as great as our love for you. [13]In this way he will make your hearts strong, and you will be perfect and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all who belong to him.

A Life that Pleases God

4 Finally, brothers, you learned from us how you should live in order to please God. This is, of course, the way you have been living. And now we beg and urge you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, to do even more. [2]For you know the instructions we gave you, by the authority of the Lord Jesus. [3]This is God's will for you: he wants you to be holy and completely free from immorality. [4]Each of you men should know how to take a wife in a holy and honorable way, [5]not with a lustful desire, like the heathen who do not know God. [6]In this matter, then, no man should do wrong to his brother or take advantage of him. We have told you this before, we strongly warned you, that the Lord will punish those who do such wrongs. [7]God did not call us to live in immorality, but in holiness. [8]So then, whoever rejects this teaching is not rejecting man, but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.

[9]There is no need to write you about love for your fellow believers. You yourselves have been taught by God how you should love one another. [10]And you have behaved in this way toward all the brothers in all of Macedonia. So we beg you, brothers, to do even more. [11]Make it your aim to live a quiet life, to mind your own business, and earn your own living, just as we told you before. [12]In this way you will win the respect of those

Earn your own living

who are not believers, and will not have to depend on anyone for what you need.

The Lord's Coming

[13]Brothers, we want you to know the truth about those who have died, so that you will not be sad, as are those who have no hope. [14]We believe that Jesus died and rose again; so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have died believing in him.

[15]This is the Lord's teaching that we tell you: we who are alive on the day the Lord comes will not go ahead of those who have died. [16]There will be the shout of command, the archangel's voice, the sound of God's trumpet, and the Lord himself will come down from heaven. Those who have died believing in Christ will rise to life first; [17]then we who are living at that time will all be gathered up along with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will always be with the Lord. [18]So then, cheer each other up with these words.

Be Ready for the Lord's Coming

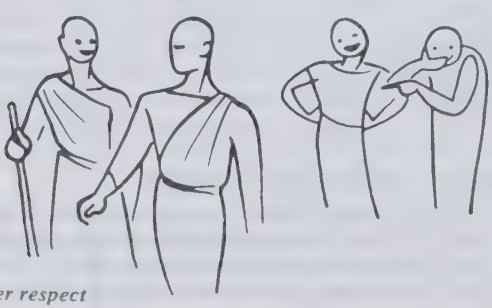
5 There is no need to write you, brothers, about the times and occasions when these things will happen. [2]For you yourselves know very well that the Day of the Lord will come as a thief comes at night. [3]When people say, "Everything is quiet and safe," then suddenly de-

struction will hit them! They will not escape—it will be like the pains that come upon a woman who is about to give birth. [4]But you, brothers, are not in the darkness, and the Day should not take you by surprise like a thief. [5]All of you are people who belong to the light, who belong to the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. [6]So then, we should not be sleeping, like the others; we should be awake and sober. [7]It is at night when people sleep; it is at night when people get drunk. [8]But we belong to the day, and we should be sober. We must wear faith and love as a breastplate, and our hope of salvation as a helmet. [9]God did not choose us to suffer his wrath, but to possess salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, [10]who died for us in order that we might live together with him, whether we are alive or dead when he comes. [11]For this reason encourage one another, and help one another, just as you are now doing.

Final Instructions and Greetings

[12]We beg you, brothers, to pay proper respect to those who work among you, those whom the Lord has chosen to guide and instruct you. [13]Treat them with the greatest respect and love, because of the work they do. Be at peace among yourselves.

[14]We urge you brothers: warn the idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with all. [15]See that no one pays back wrong for wrong, but at all times make it your aim to do good to one another and to all people.



Pay proper respect

16 Be joyful always, 17 pray at all times, 18 be thankful in
all circumstances. This is what God wants of you, in
your life in Christ Jesus.
19 Do not restrain the Holy Spirit; 20 do not despise
inspired messages. 21 Put all things to the test: keep what
is good, 22 and avoid every kind of evil.
23 May the God who gives us peace make you holy in
every way, and keep your whole being, spirit, soul, and
body, free from all fault at the coming of our Lord Jesus
Christ. 24 He who calls you will do it, because he is
faithful.
25 Pray also for us, brothers.
26 Greet all the brothers with a brotherly kiss.
27 I urge you, by the authority of the Lord, to read this
letter to all the brothers.
28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

1 From Paul, Silas, and Timothy —
To the people of the church in Thessalonica, who belong to God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
[2]May God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

The Judgment at Christ's Coming

[3]We must thank God at all times for you, brothers. It is right for us to do so, because your faith is growing so much and the love each of you has for the others is becoming greater. [4]That is why we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God. We boast about the way you continue to endure and believe, through all the persecutions and sufferings you are experiencing.

[5]Here is the proof of God's righteous judgment, because as a result of all this you will become worthy of his Kingdom, for which you are suffering. [6]God will do what is right: he will bring suffering on those who make you suffer, [7]and he will give relief to you who suffer, and to us as well. He will do this when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven with his mighty angels, [8]with a flaming fire, to punish those who do not know God and those who do not obey the Good News about our Lord Jesus. [9]They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, separated from the presence of the Lord and from his glorious might, [10]when he comes on that Day to receive glory from all his people and honor from all who believe. You too will be among them, because you have believed the message that we told you.

[11]This is why we always pray for you. We ask our God to make you worthy of the life he called you to live. May he, by his power, fulfill all your desire for goodness and complete your work of faith. [12]In this way the name of our Lord Jesus will receive glory from you, and you from him, by the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Wicked One

2 Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to be with him: I beg you, brothers, [2]do not be so easily confused in your thinking or upset by the claim that the Day of the Lord has come. Perhaps this was said by someone prophesying, or by someone preaching. Or it may have been said that we wrote this in a letter. [3]Do not let anyone fool you in any way. For the Day will not come until the final Rebellion takes place and the Wicked One appears, who is destined to hell. [4]He will oppose everything which men worship and everything which men consider divine. He will put himself above them all, and even go in and sit down in God's temple and claim to be God.

[5]Don't you remember? I told you all this while I was with you. [6]Yet there is something that keeps this from happening now, and you know what it is. At the proper time, then, the Wicked One will appear. [7]The Mysterious Wickedness is already at work, but what is going to happen will not happen until the one who holds it back is taken out of the way. [8]Then the Wicked One will appear, and the Lord Jesus will kill him with the breath from his mouth and destroy him with his glorious appearing, when he comes. [9]The Wicked One will come with the power of Satan and perform all kinds of miracles and false signs and wonders, [10]and use every kind of wicked deceit on those who will perish. They will perish because they did not welcome and love the truth so as to be saved. [11]For this reason God sends the power of error to work in them so that they believe what is false. [12]The result is that all who have not believed the truth, but have taken pleasure in sin, will be condemned.

You Are Chosen for Salvation

[13]We must thank God at all times for you, brothers, you whom the Lord loves. For God chose you as the first to be saved, by the Spirit's power to make you God's holy people, and by your faith in the truth. [14]God called you to this through the Good News we preached to you; he called you to possess your share of the glory of our

Lord Jesus Christ. 15So then, brothers, stand firm and hold on to those truths which we taught you, both in our preaching and in our letter.

16May our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and in his grace gave us eternal courage and a good hope, 17fill your hearts with courage and make you strong to do and say all that is good.

Pray for Us

3 Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the Lord's message may continue to spread rapidly and receive glory, just as it did among you. 2Pray also that God will rescue us from wicked and evil men. For not all people believe the message.

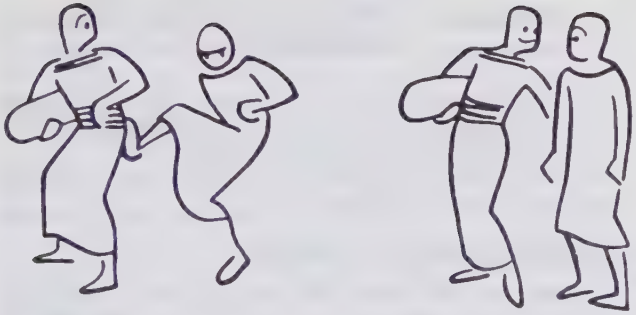
3But the Lord is faithful. He will make you strong and keep you safe from the Evil One. 4And the Lord gives us confidence in you; we are sure that you are doing and will continue to do what we tell you.

5May the Lord lead your hearts to the love for God and to the endurance that is given by Christ.

The Obligation to Work

6In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ we command you, brothers: keep away from all brothers who are living a lazy life, who do not follow the instructions that we gave them. 7You yourselves know very well that you should do just what we did. We were not lazy when we were with you. 8We did not accept anyone's support without paying for it. Instead, we worked and toiled; day and night we kept working so as not to be an expense to any of you. 9We did this, not because we do not have the right to demand our support; we did it to be an example for you to follow. 10While we were with you we told you, "Whoever does not want to work is not allowed to eat."

11We say this because we hear that there are some people among you who live lazy lives, who do nothing except meddle in other people's business. 12In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ we command these people and warn them: they must lead orderly lives and work to earn their own living.



Do not treat him as an enemy

[13]But you, brothers, must not get tired of doing good.
[14]There may be someone there who will not obey the
message we send you in this letter. If so, take note of him
and have nothing to do with him, so that he will be
ashamed. [15]But do not treat him as an enemy; instead,
warn him as a brother.

Final Words

[16]May the Lord himself, who is our source of peace,
give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord
be with you all.
[17]With my own hand I write this: *Greetings from*
Paul. This is the way I sign every letter; this is how I
write.
[18]May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with
you all.

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHY

1 From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by order of
God our Savior and Christ Jesus our hope—
2To Timothy, my true son in the faith:
May God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord give
you grace, mercy, and peace.

Warnings against False Teaching

3I want you to stay in Ephesus, just as I urged you
when I was on my way to Macedonia. Some people
there are teaching false doctrines, and you must order
them to stop. 4Tell them to give up those legends and
those long lists of names of ancestors, because these
only produce arguments; they do not serve God's plan,
which is known by faith. 5The purpose of this order is
to arouse the love that comes from a pure heart, a clear
conscience, and a genuine faith. 6Some men have turned
away from these and have lost their way in foolish dis-
cussions. 7They want to be teachers of God's law, but
they do not understand their own words or the matters
about which they speak with so much confidence.
8We know that the Law is good, if it is used as it
should be used. 9It must be remembered, of course, that
laws are made, not for good people, but for lawbreakers
and criminals, for the godless and sinful, for those who
are not religious or spiritual, for men who kill their
fathers or mothers, for murderers, 10for the immoral, for
sexual perverts, for kidnappers, for those who lie and
give false testimony or do anything else contrary to the
true teaching. 11That teaching is found in the gospel that
was entrusted to me to announce, the Good News from
the glorious and blessed God.

Gratitude for God's Mercy

12I give thanks to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has
given me strength for my work. I thank him for consid-
ering me worthy, and appointing me to serve him,
13even though in the past I spoke evil of him, and per-
secuted and insulted him. But God was merciful to me,

because I did not believe and so did not know what I was doing. [14]And our Lord poured out his abundant grace on me and gave me the faith and love which are ours in union with Christ Jesus. [15]This is a true saying, to be completely accepted and believed: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. I am the worst of them, [16]but it was for this very reason that God was merciful to me, in order that Christ Jesus might show his full patience in dealing with me, the worst of sinners, as an example for all those who would later believe in him and receive eternal life. [17]To the eternal King, immortal and invisible, the only God —to him be honor and glory forever and ever! Amen.

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners

[18]Timothy, my child, I entrust this command to you. It is according to the words of prophecy spoken long ago about you. Let those words be your weapons as you fight the good fight, [19]and keep your faith and clear conscience. Some men have not listened to their conscience, and have made a ruin of their faith. [20]Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom

I have handed over to the power of Satan, so that they will be taught to stop speaking evil of God.

Church Worship

2 First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, requests, and thanksgivings be offered to God for all men; [2]for kings and all others who are in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceful life, in entire godliness and proper conduct. [3]This is good and it pleases God our Savior, [4]who wants all men to be saved and to come to know the truth. [5]For there is one God, and there is one who brings God and men together, the man Christ Jesus, [6]who gave himself to redeem all men. That was the proof, at the right time, that God wants all men to be saved, [7]and this is why I was sent as an apostle and teacher of the Gentiles, to proclaim the message of faith and truth. I am not lying, I am telling the truth!

[8]I want men everywhere to pray, men who are dedicated to God and can lift up their hands in prayer without anger or argument.

[9]I also want women to be modest and sensible about their clothes and to dress properly; not with fancy hair styles, or with gold ornaments or pearls or expensive dresses, [10]but with good deeds, as is proper for women who claim to be religious. [11]Women should learn in silence and all humility. [12]I do not allow women to teach or to have authority over men; they must keep quiet. [13]For Adam was created first, and then Eve. [14]And it was not Adam who was deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and broke God's law. [15]But a woman will be saved through having children, if she perseveres in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.

Leaders in the Church

3 This is a true saying: If a man is eager to be a church leader he desires an excellent work. [2]A church leader must be a man without fault; he must have only one wife, be sober, self-controlled, and orderly; he must welcome strangers in his home; he must be able to teach; [3]he must not be a drunkard or a violent man, but gentle and peaceful; he must not love money; [4]he must be able to manage his own family well, and make his children obey him with all respect. [5]For if a man does not know

how to manage his own family, how can he take care of the church of God? 6He must not be a man who has been recently converted; else he will swell up with pride and be condemned, as the Devil was. 7He should be a man who is respected by the people outside the church, so that he will not be disgraced and fall into the Devil's trap.

Helpers in the Church

8Church helpers must also be of a good character and sincere; they must not drink too much wine or be greedy; 9they should hold to the revealed truth of the faith with a clear conscience. 10They should be tested first, and then, if they pass the test, they should serve. 11Their wives also must be of good character, and not gossip; they must be sober and honest in everything. 12A church helper must have only one wife, and be able to manage his children and family well. 13Those who do a good work win for themselves a good standing and are able to speak boldly about their faith in Christ Jesus.

The Great Secret

14As I write this letter to you, I hope to come and see you soon. 15But if I delay, this letter will let you know how we should conduct ourselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. 16No one can deny how great is the secret of our religion.

He appeared in human form,
was shown to be right by the Spirit,
and was seen by angels.
He was preached among the nations,
was believed in the world, and was
taken up to heaven.

False Teachers

4 The Spirit says clearly that some men will abandon the faith in later times; they will obey lying spirits and follow the teachings of demons. 2These teachings come from the deceit of men who are liars, and whose consciences are dead, as if burnt with a hot iron. 3Such men teach that it is wrong to marry and to eat certain

foods. But God created these foods to be eaten, after a prayer of thanks, by those who are believers and have come to know the truth. 4Everything that God has created is good; nothing is to be rejected, but all is to be received with a prayer of thanks; 5because the word of God and the prayer make it acceptable to God.

A Good Servant of Christ Jesus

6If you give these instructions to the brothers you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, as you feed yourself spiritually on the words of faith and of the true teaching which you have followed. 7But keep away from those godless legends, which are not worth telling. Keep yourself in training for a godly life. 8Physical exercise has some value in it, but spiritual exercise is valuable in every way, because it promises life both for now and for the future. 9This is a true saying, to be completely accepted and believed. 10That is why we struggle and work hard, because we have placed our hope in the living God, who is Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.

11Command and teach these things. 12Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but be an example for the believers, in your speech, your conduct, your love, faith, and purity. 13Give your time and effort, until I come, to the public reading of the Scriptures, and to preaching and teaching. 14Do not neglect the spiritual gift that is in you, which was given to you when the prophets spoke and the elders laid their hands on you. 15Practice these things and give yourself to them, in order that your progress may be seen by all. 16Watch yourself, and watch your teaching. Keep on doing these things, because if you do you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Responsibilities toward Believers

5 Do not rebuke an older man, but appeal to him as if he were your father. Treat the younger men as your brothers, 2the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, with all purity.

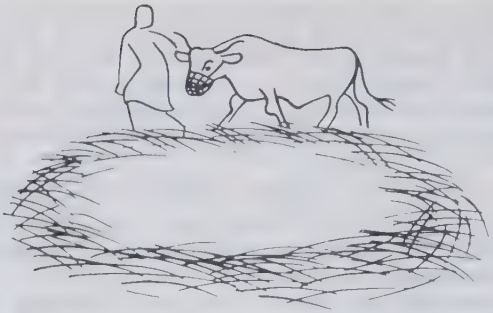
3Show respect for widows who really are widows. 4But if a widow has children or grandchildren, they

should learn first to carry out their religious duties toward their own family and in this way repay their parents and grandparents, because that is what pleases God. [5]The woman who is a true widow, with no one to take care of her, has placed her hope in God and continues to pray and ask him for his help night and day. [6]But the widow who gives herself to pleasure has already died, even though she lives. [7]Give them this command, so that no one will find fault with them. [8]But if someone does not take care of his relatives, especially the members of his own family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

[9]Do not add any widow to the list of widows unless she is more than sixty years old. In addition, she must have been married only once, [10]and have a reputation for good deeds: a woman who brought up her children well, received strangers in her home, washed the feet of God's people, helped those in trouble, and gave herself to all kinds of good works.

[11]But do not include the younger widows in the list; because when their desires make them want to marry, they turn away from Christ, [12]and so become guilty of breaking their first promise to him. [13]They also learn to waste their time in going around from house to house; but even worse, they learn to be gossips and busybodies, talking of things they should not. [14]So I would rather that the younger widows get married, have children, and take care of their homes, so as to give our enemies no chance of speaking evil of us. [15]For some widows have already turned away to follow Satan. [16]But if any woman who is a believer has widows in her family, she must take care of them, and not put the burden on the church, so that it may take care of the widows who are all alone.

[17]The elders who do good work as leaders should be considered worthy of receiving double pay, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. [18]For the scripture says, "Do not tie up the mouth of the ox when it is treading out the grain," and, "The worker deserves his wages." [19]Do not listen to an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. [20]Rebuke publicly all those who commit sins, so that the rest may be afraid.



Do not tie up the mouth

[21]In the presence of God, and of Christ Jesus, and of the holy angels, I solemnly call upon you to obey these instructions without showing any prejudice or favor to anyone in anything you do. [22]Be in no hurry to lay hands on anyone for the Lord's service. Take no part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure.

[23]Do not drink water only, but take a little wine to help your digestion, since you are sick so often.

[24]The sins of some men are plain to see, and their sins go ahead of them to judgment; but the sins of others are seen only later. [25]In the same way good deeds are plainly seen, and even those that are not so plain cannot be hidden.

6 All who are slaves must consider their masters worthy of all respect, so that no one will speak evil of the name of God and of our teaching. [2]Slaves belonging to masters who are believers must not despise them because they are their brothers. Instead, they are to serve them even better, because those who benefit from their work are believers whom they love.

False Teaching and True Riches

You must teach and preach these things. [3]Whoever teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the true words of our Lord Jesus Christ and with the teaching of our religion [4]is swollen with pride and knows nothing. He has an unhealthy desire to argue and quar-

rel about words, and this brings on jealousy, dissension, insults, evil suspicions, [5]and constant arguments from men whose minds do not function and who no longer have the truth. They think that religion is a way to become rich.

[6]Well, religion does make a man very rich, if he is satisfied with what he has. [7]What did we bring into the world? Nothing! What can we take out of the world? Nothing! [8]So then, if we have food and clothes, that should be enough for us. [9]But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and are caught in the trap of many foolish and harmful desires, which pull men down to ruin and destruction. [10]For the love of money is a source of all kinds of evil. Some have been so eager to have it that they have wandered away from the faith and have broken their hearts with many sorrows.

Personal Instructions

[11]But you, man of God, avoid all these things. Strive for righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. [12]Run your best in the race of faith, and win eternal life for yourself; for it was to this life that God called you when you made your good profession of faith before many witnesses. [13]Before God, who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus, who made the good profession before Pontius Pilate, I command you: [14]Obey the commandment and keep it pure and faultless, until the Day our Lord Jesus Christ will appear. [15]His appearing will be brought about at the right time by God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. [16]He alone is immortal; he lives in the light that no one can approach. No one has ever seen him, no one can ever see him. To him be honor and eternal might! Amen.

[17]Command those who are rich in the things of this life not to be proud, and to place their hope, not in such an uncertain thing as riches, but in God, who generously gives us everything for us to enjoy. [18]Command them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share with others. [19]In this way they will store up for themselves a treasure which will be a solid foun-

dation for the future. And then they will be able to win the life which is true life.

[20]Timothy, keep safe what has been turned over to your care. Avoid the godless talk and foolish arguments of "Knowledge," as some people wrongly call it. [21]For some have claimed to possess it, and as a result they have lost the way of faith.

God's grace be with you all.

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY

1 From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will,
sent to proclaim the promised life which we have in
union with Christ Jesus—
[2]To Timothy, my dear son:
May God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord give
you grace, mercy, and peace.

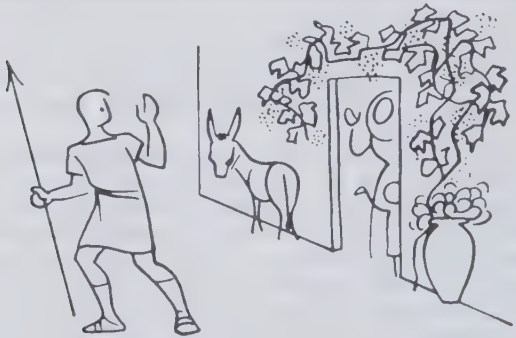
Thanksgiving and Encouragement

[3]I give thanks to God, whom I serve with a clear
conscience, as my ancestors did. I thank him as I
remember you always in my prayers, night and day. [4]I
remember your tears, and I want to see you very much,
so that I may be filled with joy. [5]I remember the sincere
faith you have, the kind of faith that your grandmother
Lois and your mother Eunice also had. I am sure that
you have it also. [6]For this reason I remind you to keep
alive the gift that God gave to you when I laid my hands
on you. [7]For the Spirit that God has given us does not
make us timid; instead, his Spirit fills us with power,
love, and self-control.
[8]Do not be ashamed, then, of witnessing for our Lord;
neither be ashamed of me, his prisoner. Instead, take
your part in suffering for the Good News, as God gives
you the strength for it. [9]He saved us and called us to be
his own people, not because of what we have done, but
because of his own purpose and grace. He gave us this
grace by means of Christ Jesus before the beginning of
time, [10]but now it has been revealed to us through the
coming of our Savior, Christ Jesus. He has ended the
power of death, and through the Good News has re-
vealed immortal life.
[11]God has appointed me to proclaim the Good News
as an apostle and teacher, [12]and it is for this reason that
I suffer these things. But I am still full of confidence,
because I know whom I have trusted, and I am sure that
he is able to keep safe until that Day what he has en-
trusted to me. [13]Hold to the true words that I taught
you, as the example for you to follow, and stay in the

faith and love that are ours in union with Christ Jesus.
14 Keep the good things that have been entrusted to you,
through the power of the Holy Spirit, who lives in us.
15 You know that everyone in the province of Asia
deserted me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes.
16 May the Lord show mercy to the family of Onesiphorus, because he cheered me up many times. He was
not ashamed that I am in prison, 17 but as soon as he
arrived in Rome he started looking for me until he
found me. 18 May the Lord grant him to receive mercy
from the Lord on that Day! And you know very well
how much he did for me in Ephesus.

A Loyal Soldier of Christ Jesus

2 As for you, my son, be strong through the grace
that is ours in union with Christ Jesus. 2 Take the
words that you heard me preach in the presence of many
witnesses, and give them into the keeping of men you
can trust, men who will be able to teach others also.



Take your part in suffering

3 Take your part in suffering, as a loyal soldier of
Christ Jesus. 4 A soldier in active service wants to please
his commanding officer, and so does not get mixed up
in the affairs of civilian life. 5 An athlete who runs in a
race cannot win the prize unless he obeys the rules. 6 The
farmer who has done the hard work should have the first
share of the harvest. 7 Think about what I am saying,
because the Lord will enable you to understand all
things.

[8]Remember Jesus Christ, who was raised from death,
who was a descendant of David, as told in the Good
News I preach. [9]Because I preach the Good News I
suffer, and I am even chained like a criminal. But the
word of God is not in chains, [10]and for this reason I
endure everything for the sake of God's chosen people,
in order that they too may obtain the salvation that is
in Christ Jesus, together with eternal glory. [11]This is a
true saying:

"If we have died with him,
we shall also live with him.
[12] If we continue to endure,
we shall also rule with him.
If we deny him,
he also will deny us.
[13] If we are not faithful,
he remains faithful,
because he cannot be false to himself."

An Approved Worker

[14]Remind your people of this, and give them solemn
warning in God's presence not to fight over words. It
does no good, but only ruins the people who listen. [15]Do
your best to win full approval in God's sight, as a worker
who is not ashamed of his work, one who correctly
teaches the message of God's truth. [16]Keep away from
godless and foolish discussions, which only drive people
farther away from God. [17]What they teach will be like
an open sore that eats away the flesh. Two of these
teachers are Hymenaeus and Philetus. [18]They have left
the way of truth and are upsetting the faith of some
believers by saying that our resurrection has already
taken place. [19]But the solid foundation that God has laid
cannot be shaken; and these words are written on it:
"The Lord knows those who are his"; and, "Whoever
says that he belongs to the Lord must turn away from
wrongdoing."

[20]In a large house there are dishes and bowls of all
kinds: some are made of silver and gold, others of wood
and clay; some are for special occasions, others for ordi-
nary use. [21]If anyone makes himself clean from all these

evil things, he will be used for special purposes, because he is dedicated and useful to his Master, ready to be used for every good work. [22]Avoid the passions of youth, and strive for righteousness, faith, love, and peace, together with those who with a pure heart call for the Lord to help them. [23]But stay away from foolish and ignorant arguments; you know that they end up in quarrels. [24]The Lord's servant must not quarrel. He must be kind toward all, a good and patient teacher, [25]who is gentle as he corrects his opponents. It may be that God will give them the opportunity to repent and come to know the truth. [26]And then they will return to their senses and escape from the trap of the Devil, who had caught them and made them obey his will.

The Last Days

3 Remember this! There will be difficult times in the last days. [2]Men will be selfish, greedy, boastful, and conceited; they will be insulting, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, and irreligious; [3]they will be unkind, merciless, slanderers, violent, and fierce; they will hate the good; [4]they will be treacherous, reckless, and swollen with pride; they will love pleasure rather than God; [5]they will hold to the outward form of our religion, but reject its real power. Keep away from these men. [6]Some of them go into homes and get control over weak women who are burdened by the guilt of their sins and driven by all kinds of desires, [7]women who are always trying to learn but who never can come to know the truth. [8]As Jannes and Jambres were opposed to Moses, so also these men are opposed to the truth—men whose minds do not function and who are failures in the faith. [9]But they will not get very far, because everyone will see how stupid they are, just as it happened to Jannes and Jambres.

Last Instructions

[10]But you have followed my teaching, my conduct, and my purpose in life; you have observed my faith, my

patience, my love, my endurance, [11]my persecutions, and my sufferings. You know all the things that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, the terrible persecutions I endured! But the Lord rescued me from them all. [12]All who want to live a godly life in union with Christ Jesus will be persecuted; [13]but evil men and impostors will keep on going from bad to worse, deceiving others and being deceived themselves. [14]But as for you, continue in the truths that you were taught and firmly believe. You know who your teachers were, [15]and you remember that ever since you were a child you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. [16]All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults, and giving instruction for right living, [17]so that the man who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped to do every kind of good work.

4 I solemnly urge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge all men, living and dead: because of his coming and of his Kingdom, I command you [2]to preach the message, to insist upon telling it, whether the time is right or not; to convince, reproach, and encourage, teaching with all patience. [3]The time will come when men will not listen to the true teaching, but will follow their own desires, and will collect for themselves more and more teachers who will tell them what they are itching to hear. [4]They will turn away from listening to the truth and give their attention to legends. [5]But you must keep control of yourself in all circumstances; endure suffering, do the work of a preacher of the Good News, and perform your whole duty as a servant of God.

[6]As for me, the hour has come for me to be sacrificed; the time is here for me to leave this life. [7]I have done my best in the race, I have run the full distance, I have kept the faith. [8]And now the prize of victory is waiting for me, the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that Day—and not only to me, but to all those who wait with love for him to appear.

The prize of victory is waiting for me

Personal Words

[9]Do your best to come to me soon. [10]Demas fell in love with this present world and has deserted me; he has gone off to Thessalonica. Crescens went to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia. [11]Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he can help me in the work. [12]I sent Tychicus to Ephesus. [13]When you come, bring my coat that I left in Troas with Carpus; bring the books too, and especially the ones made of parchment.

[14]Alexander the metalworker did me great harm; the Lord will reward him according to what he has done. [15]Be on your guard against him yourself, because he was violently opposed to our message.

[16]No one stood by me the first time I defended myself; all deserted me. May God not count it against them! [17]But the Lord stayed with me and gave me strength, so that I was able to proclaim the full message for all the Gentiles to hear; and I was rescued from the lion's mouth. [18]And the Lord will rescue me from all evil, and take me safely into his heavenly Kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever! Amen.

Final Greetings

19 I send greetings to Priscilla and Aquila, and to the
family of Onesiphorus. 20 Erastus stayed in Corinth, and
I left Trophimus in Miletus, because he was sick. 21 Do
your best to come before winter.

Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, and Claudia send their greetings, and so do all the other brothers.

22 The Lord be with your spirit.

God's grace be with you all.

PAUL'S LETTER TO TITUS

1 From Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ.

I was chosen and sent to help the faith of God's chosen people and lead them to the truth taught by our religion, [2]which is based on the hope for eternal life. God, who does not lie, promised us this life before the beginning of time, [3]and at the right time he revealed it in his message. This was entrusted to me, and I proclaim it by order of God our Savior.

[4]I write to Titus, my true son in the faith that we share:

May God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior give you grace and peace.

Titus' Work in Crete

[5]I left you in Crete for you to put in order the things that still needed doing, and to appoint church elders in every town. Remember my instructions: [6]an elder must be without fault; he must have only one wife, and his children must be believers and not have the reputation of being wild or disobedient. [7]For since he is in charge of God's work, the church leader should be without fault. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered, or a drunkard, or violent, or greedy. [8]He must be hospitable and love what is good. He must be self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. [9]He must hold firmly to the message which can be trusted and which agrees with the doctrine. In this way he will be able to encourage others with the true teaching, and also show the error of those who are opposed to it.

[10]For there are many who rebel and deceive others with their nonsense, especially the converts from Judaism. [11]It is necessary to stop their talking, because they are upsetting whole families by teaching what they should not, for the shameful purpose of making money. [12]It was a Cretan himself, one of their own prophets, who said, "Cretans are always liars, wicked beasts, and lazy gluttons." [13]And what he said is true. For this reason you must rebuke them sharply, so that they may

have a healthy faith, [14]and no longer hold on to Jewish legends and to human commandments which come from men who have rejected the truth. [15]Everything is pure to those who are themselves pure; but nothing is pure to those who are defiled and unbelieving, because their minds and consciences have been defiled. [16]They claim that they know God, but their actions deny it. They are hateful and disobedient, not fit to do anything good.

Sound Doctrine

2 But you must teach what is required by sound doctrine. [2]Tell the older men to be sober, sensible, and self-controlled; to be sound in their faith, love, and endurance. [3]In the same way tell the older women to behave as women who live a holy life should. They must not be slanderers, or slaves to wine. They must teach what is good, [4]in order to train the younger women to love their husbands and children, [5]to be self-controlled and pure, and to be good housewives, who obey their husbands, so that no one will speak evil of the message from God.

[6]In the same way urge the young men to be self-controlled. [7]You yourself, in all things, must be an example in good works. Be sincere and serious in your teaching. [8]Use sound words that cannot be criticized, so that your enemies may be put to shame by not having anything bad to say about us.

[9]Slaves are to obey their masters and please them in all things. They must not talk back to them, [10]or steal from them. Instead, they must show that they are always good and faithful, so as to bring credit to the teaching about God our Savior in all they do.

[11]For God has revealed his grace for the salvation of all men. [12]That grace instructs us to give up ungodly living and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this world, [13]as we wait for the blessed Day we hope for, when the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ will appear. [14]He gave himself for us, to rescue us from all wickedness and make us a pure people who belong to him alone and are eager to do good.

15 Teach these things, and use your full authority as
you encourage and rebuke your hearers. Let none of
them look down on you.

Christian Conduct

3 Remind your people to submit to rulers and au-
thorities, to obey them, to be ready to do every
good thing. 2 Tell them not to speak evil of anyone, but
to be peaceful and friendly, and always show a gentle
attitude toward all men. 3 For we ourselves were once
foolish, disobedient, and wrong. We were slaves to pas-
sions and pleasures of all kinds. We spent our lives in
malice and envy; others hated us and we hated them.
4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior
appeared, 5 he saved us. It was not because of any good
works that we ourselves had done, but because of his
own mercy that he saved us through the washing by
which the Holy Spirit gives us new birth and new life.
6 God poured out the Holy Spirit abundantly on us,
through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that by his grace
we might be put right with God and come into pos-
session of the eternal life we hope for. 8 This is a true
saying.

I want you to give special emphasis to these matters,
so that those who believe in God may be concerned with
giving their time to doing good works. These are good
and useful for men. 9 But avoid stupid arguments, long
lists of names of ancestors, quarrels, and fights about the
Law. They are useless and worthless. 10 Give at least two
warnings to the man who causes divisions, and then
have nothing more to do with him. 11 You know that
such a person is corrupt, and his sins prove that he is
wrong.

Final Instructions

12 When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your
best to come to me in Nicopolis, because I have decided
to spend the winter there. 13 Do your best to help Zenas
the lawyer and Apollos to get started on their travels,
and see to it that they have everything they need.
14 Have our people learn to give their time in doing good

works, to provide for real needs; they should not live useless lives.

15 All who are with me send you greetings. Give our greetings to our friends in the faith.

God's grace be with you all.

PAUL'S LETTER TO PHILEMON

[1]From Paul, a prisoner for the sake of Christ Jesus,
and from our brother Timothy –
To our friend and fellow worker Philemon, [2]and the
church that meets in your house, and our sister Apphia,
and our fellow soldier Archippus:
[3]May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give
you grace and peace.

Philemon's Love and Faith

[4]Every time I pray, brother Philemon, I mention you
and give thanks to my God. [5]For I hear of your love for
all God's people and the faith you have in the Lord
Jesus. [6]My prayer is that our fellowship with you as
believers will bring about a deeper understanding of
every blessing which we have in our life in Christ. [7]Your
love, dear brother, has brought me great joy and much
encouragement! You have cheered the hearts of all
God's people.

A Request for Onesimus

[8]For this reason I could be bold enough, as your
brother in Christ, to order you to do what should be
done. [9]But love compels me to make a request instead.
I do this even though I am Paul, the ambassador of
Christ Jesus and at present also a prisoner for his sake.
[10]So I make a request to you on behalf of Onesimus, who
is my own son in Christ; for while in prison I have
become his spiritual father. [11]At one time he was of no
use to you, but now he is useful both to you and to
me.
[12]I am sending him back to you now, and with him
goes my heart. [13]I would like to keep him here with me,
while I am in prison for the gospel's sake, so that he
could help me in your place. [14]However, I do not want
to force you to help me; rather, I would like for you to
do it of your own free will. So I will not do a thing unless
you agree.
[15]It may be that Onesimus was away from you for a
short time so that you might have him back for all time.

[16]And now he is not just a slave, but much more than a slave: he is a dear brother in Christ. How much he means to me! And how much more he will mean to you, both as a slave and as a brother in the Lord!

Welcome him back

[17]So, if you think of me as your partner, welcome him back just as you would welcome me. [18]If he has done you any wrong, or owes you anything, charge it to my account. [19]Here, I will write this with my own hand: *I, Paul, will pay you back.* (I should not have to remind you, of course, that you owe your very life to me.) [20]So, my brother, please do me this favor, for the Lord's sake; cheer up my heart, as a brother in Christ!

[21]I am sure, as I write this, that you will do what I ask—in fact I know that you will do even more. [22]At the same time, get a room ready for me, because I hope that God will answer the prayers of all of you and give me back to you.

Final Greetings

[23]Epaphras, who is in prison with me for the sake of Christ Jesus, sends you his greetings, [24]and so do my fellow workers Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke.

[25]May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS

God's Word through His Son

1 In the past God spoke to our ancestors many times
and in many ways through the prophets, [2]but in
these last days he has spoken to us through his Son. He
is the one through whom God created the universe, the
one whom God has chosen to possess all things at the
end. [3]He shines with the brightness of God's glory; he
is the exact likeness of God's own being, and sustains
the universe with his powerful word. After he had made
men clean from their sins, he sat down in heaven at the
right side of God, the Supreme Power.

The Son Greater than the Angels

[4]The Son was made greater than the angels, just as the
name that God gave him is greater than theirs. [5]For God
never said to any of his angels,

"You are my Son;
today I have become your Father."

Nor did God say to any angel,

"I will be his Father,
and he shall be my Son."

[6]When God was about to send his firstborn Son into
the world, he also said,

"All of God's angels must worship him."

[7]This is what God said about the angels,

"God makes his angels winds,
and his servants flames of fire."

[8]About the Son, however, God said:

"Your throne, O God, will last forever
and ever!
You rule over your kingdom with jus-
tice.
[9] You love the right and hate the wrong;
that is why God, your God, chose you
and gave you the joy of an honor far
greater
than he gave to your companions."

[10]He also said,
"You, Lord, in the beginning created the earth,
and with your own hands you made the heavens.
[11] They will all disappear, but you will remain;
they will all grow old like clothes.
[12] You will fold them up like a coat,
and they will be changed like clothes.
But you are always the same,
and you will never grow old."
[13]God never did say to any of his angels:
"Sit here at my right side,
until I put your enemies
as a footstool under your feet."
[14]What are the angels, then? They are all spirits who serve God and are sent by him to help those who are to receive salvation.

The Great Salvation

2 That is why we must hold on all the more firmly to the truths we have heard, so that we will not be carried away. [2]The message given by the angels was shown to be true, and anyone who did not follow it or obey it received the punishment he deserved. [3]How, then, shall we escape if we pay no attention to such a great salvation? The Lord himself first announced this salvation, and those who heard him proved to us that it is true. [4]At the same time God added his witness to theirs by doing signs of power, wonders, and many kinds of miracles. He also distributed the gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his will.

The Leader to Salvation

[5]God did not place the angels as rulers over the world he was about to create—the world of which we speak. [6]Instead, as it is said somewhere in the Scriptures:
"God, what is man, that you should think of him;
mere man, that you should care for him?
[7] You made him for a little while lower than the angels;

you crowned him with glory and honor,
[8] and made him ruler over all things."

It says that God made man "ruler over all things"; this clearly includes everything. But we do not see man ruling over all things now. [9]But we do see Jesus! For a little while he was made lower than the angels, so that through God's grace he should die for all men. We see him crowned with glory and honor now because of the death he suffered. [10]It was only right that God, who creates and preserves all things, should make Jesus perfect through suffering, in order to bring many sons to share his glory. For Jesus is the one who leads them to salvation.

[11]He makes men pure from their sins, and both he and those who are made pure all have the same Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them his brothers. [12]As he says,

"God, I will speak about you to my
brothers;
I will praise you before the whole
gathering."

[13]He also says, "I will put my trust in God." And he also says, "Here I am with the children that God has given me."

[14]Since the children, as he calls them, are people of flesh and blood, Jesus himself became like them and shared their human nature. He did so that through his death he might destroy the Devil, who has the power over death, [15]and so set free those who were slaves all their lives because of their fear of death. [16]For it is clear that it is not the angels that he helps. Instead, as the scripture says, "He helps the descendants of Abraham." [17]This means that he had to become like his brothers in every way, in order to be their faithful and merciful high priest in his service to God, so that the people's sins would be forgiven. [18]And now he can help those who are tempted, because he himself was tempted and suffered.

Jesus Greater than Moses

3 My Christian brothers, who also have been called by God! Think of Jesus, whom God sent to be the High Priest of the faith we profess. [2]He was faithful to

God, who chose him to do this work, just as Moses was faithful in his work in God's whole house. [3]A man who builds a house receives more honor than the house itself. In the same way, Jesus is worthy of much more glory than Moses. [4]Every house, of course, is built by someone—and God is the one who has built all things. [5]Moses was faithful in God's whole house as a servant, and spoke of the things that God would say in the future. [6]But Christ is faithful as the Son in charge of God's house. We are his house, if we keep our courage and our confidence in what we hope for.

Do not be stubborn

A Rest for God's People

[7]So then, as the Holy Spirit says,
"If you hear God's voice today,
[8] do not be stubborn as you were when
you rebelled against God,
as you were that day in the desert when
you put him to the test.
[9] There your ancestors put me to the test
and tried me, says God,
even though they saw what I did for
forty years.
[10] For that reason I was angry with those
people and said,

'They are always disloyal,
and refuse to obey my commands.'
[11] I was angry and made a solemn promise:
'They shall never come in and rest with
me!' "

[12]My brothers, be careful that no one among you has a heart so bad and unbelieving that he will turn away from the living God. [13]Instead, in order that none of you be deceived by sin and become stubborn, you must help one another every day, as long as the "Today" in the scripture applies to us. [14]For we are all partners with Christ, if we hold on firmly to the end the confidence we had at the beginning.

[15]This is what the scripture says:

"If you hear God's voice today,
do not be stubborn as you were
when you rebelled against God."

[16]Who heard God's voice and rebelled against him? All the people who were led out of Egypt by Moses. [17]With whom was God angry for forty years? With the people who sinned, who fell down dead in the desert. [18]When God made his solemn promise, "They shall never come in and rest with me"—of whom was he speaking? Of those who rebelled. [19]We see, then, that they were not able to go in because they did not believe.

4 Now, God has left us the promise that we may go in and rest with him. Let us fear, then, so that none of you will be found to have failed to go in to that rest. [2]For we have heard the Good News, just as they did. They heard the message but it did them no good, because when they heard it they did not receive it with faith. [3]We who believe, then, do go in and rest with God. It is just as he said,

"I was angry and made a solemn promise:
'They shall never come in and rest with
me!' "

He said this even though his work was finished from the time he created the world. [4]For somewhere in the Scriptures this is said about the seventh day, "God rested on the seventh day from all his works." [5]This same matter is spoken of again: "They shall never come in and rest

with me." [6]Those who first heard the Good News did not go in and rest with God because they did not believe. There are, then, others who are allowed to go in and rest with God. [7]This is shown by the fact that God sets another day, which is called "Today." He spoke of it many years later by means of David, in the scripture already quoted,

"If you hear God's voice today,
do not be stubborn."

[8]If Joshua had led the people into God's rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. [9]As it is, however, there still remains for God's people a rest like God's resting on the seventh day. [10]For whoever goes in and rests with God will rest from his own works, just as God rested from his. [11]Let us, then, do our best to go in and rest with God. We must not, any of us, disobey as they did and fail to go in.

[12]The word of God is alive and active. It is sharper than any double-edged sword. It cuts all the way through, to where soul and spirit meet, to where joints and marrow come together. It judges the desires and thoughts of men's hearts. [13]There is nothing that can be hid from God. Everything in all creation is exposed and lies open before his eyes; and it is to him that we must all give account of ourselves.

Jesus the Great High Priest

[14]Let us, then, hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we have a great high priest who has gone into the very presence of God—Jesus, the Son of God. [15]Our high priest is not one who cannot feel sympathy with our weaknesses. On the contrary, we have a high priest who was tempted in every way that we are, but did not sin. [16]Let us be brave, then, and come forward to God's throne, where there is grace. There we will receive mercy and find grace to help us just when we need it.

5 Every high priest is chosen from his fellow-men and appointed to serve God on their behalf, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. [2]Since he himself is weak in many ways, he is able to be gentle with those who are ignorant and make mistakes. [3]And because he is himself weak, he must offer sacrifices not only for the sins of the

people but also for his own sins. [4]No one chooses for himself the honor of being a high priest. It is only by God's call that a man is made a high priest—just as Aaron was called.

[5]In the same way, Christ did not take upon himself the honor of being a high priest. Instead, God said to him,

"You are my Son;
today I have become your Father."

[6]He also said in another place,

"You will be a priest forever,
in the priestly order of Melchizedek."

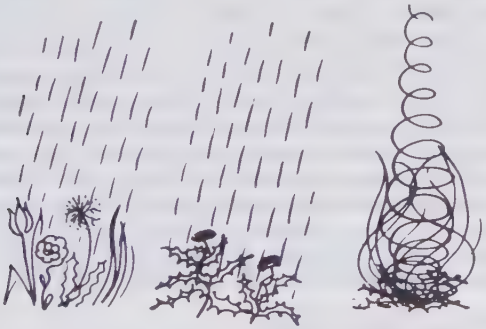
[7]In his life on earth Jesus made his prayers and requests with loud cries and tears to God, who could save him from death. Because he was humble and devoted, God heard him. [8]But even though he was God's Son he learned to be obedient by means of his sufferings. [9]When he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey him, [10]and God declared him to be high priest, in the priestly order of Melchizedek.

Warning against Falling Away

[11]There is much we have to say about this matter, but it is hard to explain to you, because you are so slow to understand. [12]There has been enough time for you to be teachers—yet you still need someone to teach you the first lessons of God's message. Instead of eating solid food, you still have to drink milk. [13]Anyone who has to drink milk is still a child, without any experience in the matter of right and wrong. [14]Solid food, on the other hand, is for adults, who have trained and used their tastes to know the difference between good and evil.

6 Let us go forward, then, to mature teaching and leave behind us the first lessons of the Christian message. We should not lay again the foundation of turning away from useless works and believing in God; [2]of the teaching about baptisms and the laying on of hands; of the raising of the dead and the eternal judgment. [3]Let us go forward! And this is what we will do, if God allows.

[4]For how can those who fall away be brought back to
repent again? They were once in God's light. They
tasted heaven's gift and received their share of the Holy
Spirit. [5]They knew from experience that God's word is
good, and they had felt the powers of the coming age.
[6]And then they fell away! It is impossible to bring them
back to repent again, because they are nailing the Son
of God to the cross once more and exposing him to
public shame.



If it grows thorns and weeds

[7]God blesses the ground that drinks in the rain that
often falls on it, and that grows plants that are useful
to those for whom it is cultivated. [8]But if it grows
thorns and weeds it is worth nothing; it is in danger of
being cursed by God, and will be destroyed by fire.

[9]But even if we speak like this, dear friends, we feel
sure about you. We know that you have the better
blessings that belong to your salvation. [10]God is not
unfair. He will not forget the work you did, or the love
you showed for him in the help you gave and still give
your fellow Christians. [11]Our great desire is that each
one of you keep up his eagerness to the end, so that
the things you hope for will come true. [12]We do not
want you to become lazy, but to be like those who
believe and are patient, and so receive what God has
promised.

God's Sure Promise

13 When God made the promise to Abraham, he made
a vow to do what he had promised. Since there was no
one greater than himself, he used his own name when
he made his vow. 14 He said, "I promise you that I will
bless you and give you many descendants." 15 Abraham
was patient, and so he received what God had promised.
16 When a man makes a vow he uses the name of some-
one greater than himself, and a vow settles all arguments
between men. 17 God wanted to make it very clear to
those who were to receive what he promised that he
would never change his purpose; so he added his vow to
the promise. 18 There are these two things, then, that
cannot change and about which God cannot lie. So we
who have found safety with him are greatly encouraged
to hold firmly to the hope that is placed before us. 19 We
have this hope as an anchor for our hearts. It is safe and
sure, and goes through the curtain of the heavenly tem-
ple into the inner sanctuary. 20 Jesus has gone in there
before us, on our behalf. He has become a high priest
forever, in the priestly order of Melchizedek.

The Priest Melchizedek

7 This Melchizedek was king of Salem and a priest of
the Most High God. As Abraham was coming back
from the battle in which he killed the kings, Mel-
chizedek met him and blessed him. 2 Abraham gave him
one tenth of all he had taken. (The first meaning of
Melchizedek's name is "King of Righteousness." And
because he was king of Salem, his name also means
"King of Peace.") 3 There is no record of Melchizedek's
father or mother, or of any of his ancestors; no record
of his birth or of his death. He is like the Son of God:
he remains a priest forever.

4 You see, then, how great he was. Abraham, the pa-
triarch, gave him one tenth of all he got in the battle.
5 And those descendants of Levi who are priests are
commanded by the Law to collect one tenth from the
people of Israel—that is, they collect it from their own
countrymen, even though they too are descendants of
Abraham. 6 Melchizedek was not descended from Levi,
but he collected one tenth from Abraham and blessed

him who received God's promises. [7]There is no doubt that the one who blesses is greater than the one who is blessed. [8]In the case of the priests, the tenth is collected by men who die; but as for Melchizedek, the tenth was collected by one who lives, as the scripture says. [9]And, so to speak, when Abraham paid the tenth, Levi (whose descendants collect the tenth) also paid it. [10]For Levi had not yet been born, but was, so to speak, in the body of his ancestor Abraham when Melchizedek met him.

[11]It was on the basis of the Levitical priesthood that the Law was given to the people of Israel. Now, if the work of the Levitical priests had been perfect, there would have been no need for a different kind of priest to appear, one who is in the priestly order of Melchizedek, not in Aaron's order. [12]For when the priesthood is changed, there also has to be a change of the law. [13]And our Lord, of whom these things are said, belonged to a different tribe; and no member of his tribe ever served as a priest at the altar. [14]It is well known that he was born a member of the tribe of Judah; and Moses did not mention this tribe when he spoke of priests.

Another Priest, like Melchizedek

[15]The matter becomes even plainer; a different priest has appeared, who is like Melchizedek. [16]He was not made a priest by human rules and regulations; he became a priest through the power of a life which has no end. [17]For the scripture says, "You will be a priest forever, in the priestly order of Melchizedek." [18]The old rule, then, is set aside, because it was weak and useless. [19]For the Law of Moses could not make anything perfect. And now a better hope has been brought in, through which we come near to God.

[20]In addition, there is also God's vow. There was no such vow when the others were made priests. [21]But Jesus became a priest by means of a vow, when God said to him,

"The Lord has made a vow,
and will not change his mind:
'You will be a priest forever.' "

[22]This difference, then, makes Jesus the guarantee also of a better covenant.

[23]There is another difference: those other priests were many because they died and could not continue their work. [24]But Jesus lives on forever, and his work as priest does not pass on to someone else. [25]And so he is able, now and always, to save those who come to God through him, because he lives forever to plead with God for them.

[26]Jesus, then, is the High Priest that meets our needs. He is holy; he has no fault or sin in him; he has been set apart from sinful men and raised above the heavens. [27]He is not like other high priests; he does not need to offer sacrifices every day, for his own sins first, and then for the sins of the people. He offered one sacrifice, once and for all, when he offered himself. [28]The Law of Moses appoints men who are imperfect to be high priests; but God's promise with the vow, which came later than the Law, appoints the Son, who has been made perfect forever.

Jesus Our High Priest

8 Here is the whole point of what we are saying: we have such a high priest as this, who sits at the right of the throne of the Divine Majesty in heaven. [2]He serves as high priest in the Most Holy Place, that is, in the real tent which was put up by the Lord, not by man.

[3]Every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and animal sacrifices to God; and so our high priest must also have something to offer. [4]If he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the Jewish Law. [5]The work they do as priests is really only a copy and a shadow of what is in heaven. It is the same as it was with Moses. When he was about to put up the tent, God told him, "Be sure to make everything like the pattern you were shown on the mountain." [6]But, as it is, Jesus has been given priestly work which is much greater than theirs, just as the covenant which he arranged between God and men is a better one, because it is based on promises of better things.

[7]If there had been nothing wrong with the first covenant, there would have been no need for a second one.

[8]But God finds fault with his people when he says,
"The days are coming, says the Lord,
when I will draw up a new covenant
with the people of Israel,
and with the tribe of Judah.
[9] It will not be like the covenant that I made
with their ancestors
on the day I took them by the hand to
lead them out of the land of Egypt.
They were not faithful to the covenant I
made with them,
and so I paid no attention to them, says
the Lord.
[10] Now, this is the covenant that I will make
with the people of Israel
in the days to come, says the Lord:
I will put my laws in their minds,
and write them on their hearts.
I will be their God,
and they shall be my people.
[11] None of them will have to teach his
fellow-citizen,
or tell his fellow-countryman,
'Know the Lord.'
Because they will all know me,
from the least to the greatest.
[12] I will have mercy on their transgressions,
and will no longer remember their
sins."
[13]By speaking of a new covenant, God has made the first one old; and anything that is getting old and worn-out will soon disappear.

Earthly and Heavenly Worship

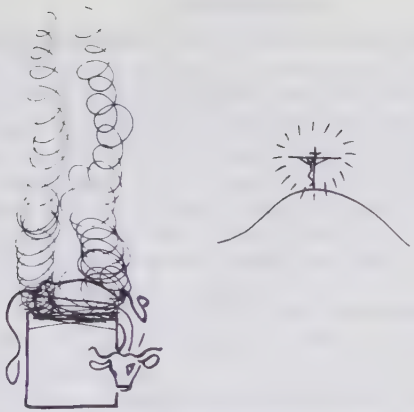
9 The first covenant had rules for worship and a man-made place for worship as well. [2]A tent was put up, the outside one, which was called the Holy Place. In it were the lamp, the table, and the bread offered to God. [3]Behind the second curtain was the tent called the Most Holy Place. [4]In it were the gold altar for the burning of incense, and the box of the covenant, all covered with gold. The box contained the gold jar with the manna in it, Aaron's rod that had sprouted leaves, and the two stone tablets with the commandments written on them.

[5]Above the box were the glorious creatures representing the Divine Presence, with their wings spread over the place where sins were forgiven. But now is not the time to explain everything in detail.

[6]This is how those things were arranged. The priests go into the outside tent every day to perform their duties; [7]but only the High Priest goes into the inside tent, and he does so only once a year. He takes blood with him which he offers to God on behalf of himself and for the sins which the people have committed without knowing they were sinning. [8]The Holy Spirit clearly teaches from all these arrangements that the way into the Most Holy Place has not yet been opened as long as the outside tent still stands. [9]This is a figure which refers to the present time. It means that the gifts and animal sacrifices offered to God cannot make the worshiper's heart perfect. [10]They have to do only with food, drink, and various cleansing ceremonies. These are all outward rules, which apply only until the time when God will reform all things.

[11]But Christ has already come as the High Priest of the good things that are already here. The tent in which he serves is greater and more perfect; it is not made by men, that is, it is not a part of this created world. [12]When Christ went through the tent and entered once and for all into the Most Holy Place, he did not take the blood of goats and calves to offer as sacrifice; rather, he took his own blood and obtained eternal salvation for us. [13]The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of the burnt calf are sprinkled on the people who are ritually unclean, and make them clean by taking away their ritual impurity. [14]Since this is true, how much more is accomplished by the blood of Christ! Through the eternal Spirit he offered himself as a perfect sacrifice to God. His blood will make our consciences clean from useless works, so that we may serve the living God.

[15]For this reason Christ is the one who arranges a new covenant, so that those who have been called by God may receive the eternal blessings that God has promised. This can be done because there has been a death which sets men free from the wrongs they did while they were under the first covenant.



More is accomplished by the blood of Christ!

16 Where there is a will, it has to be proved that the man
who made it has died. 17 For a will means nothing while
the man who made it is alive; it goes into effect only after
his death. 18 That is why even the first covenant was
made good only with the use of blood. 19 First, Moses
told the people all the commandments, as set forth in the
Law. Then he took the blood of calves, together with
water, and sprinkled both the book of the Law and all the
people with hyssop and scarlet wool. 20 He said, "This is
the blood which seals the covenant that God has com-
manded you to obey." 21 In the same way, Moses also
sprinkled the blood on the tent and over all the things
used in worship. 22 Indeed, according to the Law, almost
everything is made clean by blood; and sins are forgiven
only if blood is poured out.

Christ's Sacrifice Takes Away Sins

23 These things, which are copies of the heavenly origi-
nals, had to be made clean in this way. But the heavenly
things themselves require much better sacrifices. 24 For
Christ did not go into a holy place made by men, a copy
of the real one. He went into heaven itself, where he now
appears on our behalf in the presence of God. 25 The
Jewish High Priest goes into the Holy Place every year

with the blood of an animal. But Christ did not go in to offer himself many times; [26]for then he would have had to suffer many times ever since the creation of the world. Instead, he has now appeared once and for all, when all ages of time are nearing the end, to remove sin through the sacrifice of himself. [27]Everyone must die once, and after that be judged by God. [28]In the same manner, Christ also was offered in sacrifice once to take away the sins of many. He will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are waiting for him.

10 The Jewish Law is not a full and faithful model of the real things. It is only a faint outline of the good things to come. The same sacrifices are offered forever, year after year. How can the Law, then, by means of these sacrifices, make perfect the people who come to God? [2]If the people worshiping God had been made really clean from their sins, they would not feel guilty of sin any more, and all sacrifices would stop. [3]As it is, however, the sacrifices serve to remind people of their sins, year after year. [4]For the blood of bulls and goats can never take sins away.

[5]For this reason, when Christ was about to come into the world, he said to God:

"You do not want sacrifices and offerings,
but you have prepared a body for me.
[6] You are not pleased with animals burned whole on the altar,
or with sacrifices to take away sins.
[7] Then I said, 'Here I am, God,
to do what you want me to,
just as it is written of me in the book of the Law.'"

[8]First he said, "You neither want nor are you pleased with sacrifices and offerings, or with animals burned on the altar and the sacrifices to take away sins." He said this even though all these sacrifices are offered according to the Law. [9]Then he said, "Here I am, God, to do what you want me to do." So God does away with all the old sacrifices and puts the sacrifice of Christ in their place. [10]Because Jesus Christ did what God wanted him to do, we are all made clean from sin by

the offering that he made of his own body, once and for all.

[11]Every Jewish priest stands and performs his services every day and offers the same sacrifices many times. But these sacrifices can never take away sins. [12]Christ, however, offered one sacrifice for sins, an offering that is good forever, and then sat down at the right side of God. [13]There he now waits until God puts his enemies as a footstool under his feet. [14]With one sacrifice, then, he has made perfect forever those who are clean from sin.

[15]And the Holy Spirit also gives us his witness. First he says,

[16] "This is the covenant that I will make
with them
in the days to come, says the Lord:
I will put my laws in their hearts,
and write them on their minds."

[17]And then he says, "I will not remember their sins and wicked deeds any longer." [18]So when these have been forgiven, an offering to take away sins is no longer needed.

Let Us Come Near to God

[19]We have, then, brothers, complete freedom to go into the Most Holy Place by means of the death of Jesus. [20]He opened for us a new way, a living way, through the curtain—that is, through his own body. [21]We have a great priest in charge of the house of God. [22]Let us come near to God, then, with a sincere heart and a sure faith, with hearts that have been made clean from a guilty conscience, and bodies washed with pure water. [23]Let us hold on firmly to the hope we profess, because we can trust God to keep his promise. [24]Let us be concerned with one another, to help one another to show love and to do good. [25]Let us not give up the habit of meeting together, as some are doing. Instead, let us encourage one another, all the more since you see that the Day of the Lord is coming near.

[26]For there is no longer any sacrifice that will take away sins if we purposely go on sinning after the truth has been made known to us. [27]Instead, all that is left is

Let us not give up the habit of meeting together

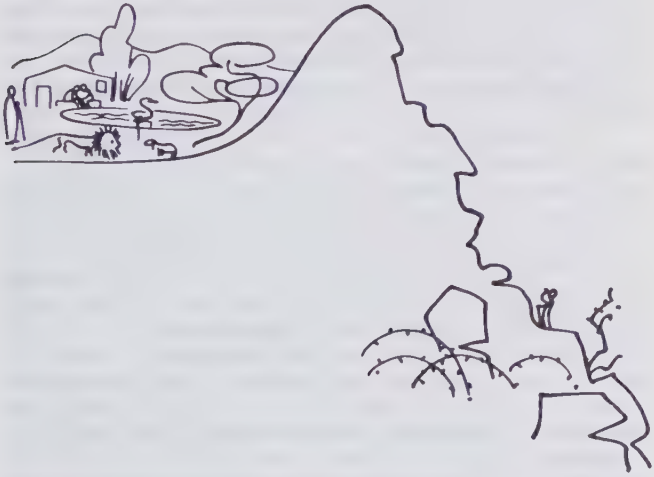
to be afraid of what will happen: the Judgment and the fierce fire which will destroy those who oppose God!
[28]Anyone who disobeys the Law of Moses is put to death, without any mercy, when judged guilty from the evidence of two or three witnesses. [29]What, then, of the man who despises the Son of God? who treats as a cheap thing the blood of God's covenant which cleansed him from sin? who insults the Spirit of grace? Just think how much worse is the punishment he will deserve! [30]For we know who said, "I will take revenge, I will repay"; and who also said, "The Lord will judge his people."
[31]It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God!

[32]Remember how it was with you in the past. In those days, after God's light had shone on you, you suffered many things, yet were not defeated by the struggle. [33]You were at times publicly insulted and mistreated, and at other times you were ready to join those who were being treated in this way. [34]You shared the sufferings of prisoners, and when all your belongings were seized you endured your loss gladly, because you knew that you still had for yourselves something much better, which would last forever. [35]Do not lose your courage, then, because it brings with it a

great reward. [36]You need to be patient, in order to do
the will of God and receive what he promises. [37]For,
as the scripture says,

"Just a little while longer,
and he who is coming will come;
he will not delay.
[38] My righteous people, however, will be-
lieve and live;
but if any of them turns back, I will
not be pleased with him."

[39]We are not people who turn back and are lost. In-
stead, we have faith and are saved.



To be certain of the things we cannot see

Faith

11 To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope
for, to be certain of the things we cannot see. [2]It
was by their faith that the men of ancient times won
God's approval.

[3]It is by faith that we understand that the universe was
created by God's word, so that what can be seen was
made out of what cannot be seen.

4It was faith that made Abel offer to God a better
sacrifice than Cain's. Through his faith he won God's
approval as a righteous man, because God himself ap-
proved his gifts. By means of his faith Abel still speaks,
even though he is dead.

5It was faith that kept Enoch from dying. Instead, he
was taken up to God, and nobody could find him, be-
cause God had taken him up. The scripture says that
before Enoch was taken up he had pleased God. 6No
man can please God without faith. For whoever comes
to God must have faith that God exists and rewards
those who seek him.

7It was faith that made Noah hear God's warnings
about things in the future that he could not see. He
obeyed God, and built an ark in which he and his family
were saved. In this way he condemned the world, and
received from God the righteousness that comes by
faith.

8It was faith that made Abraham obey when God
called him, and go out to a country which God had
promised to give him. He left his own country without
knowing where he was going. 9By faith he lived in the
country that God had promised him, as though he were
a foreigner. He lived in tents with Isaac and Jacob, who
received the same promise from God. 10For Abraham
was waiting for the city which God has designed and
built, the city with permanent foundations.

11It was faith that made Abraham able to become a
father even though he was too old and Sarah herself was
unable to have children. He trusted God to keep his
promise. 12Though he was practically dead, from this
one man there came as many descendants as there are
stars in the sky, as many as the numberless grains of sand
on the seashore.

13It was in faith that all these persons died. They did
not receive the things God had promised, but from a
long way off they saw and welcomed them, and admitted
openly that they were foreigners and refugees on earth.
14Those who say such things make it clear that they are
looking for a country of their own. 15They did not think
back to the country they had left; if they had, they would
have had the chance to return. 16Instead, it was a better
country they longed for, the heavenly country. And so

God is not ashamed to have them call him their God, because he has prepared a city for them.

17It was faith that made Abraham offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice, when God put Abraham to the test. Abraham was the one to whom God had made the promise, yet he was ready to offer his only son as a sacrifice. 18God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that you will have descendants." 19Abraham reckoned that God was able to raise Isaac back from death—and, so to speak, Abraham did receive Isaac back from death.

20It was faith that made Isaac promise blessings for the future to Jacob and Esau.

21It was faith that made Jacob bless each of the sons of Joseph just before he died; he leaned on the top of his walking stick and worshiped God.

22It was faith that made Joseph, when he was about to die, speak of the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, and leave instructions about what should be done with his body.

23It was faith that made the parents of Moses hide him for three months after he was born. They saw that he was a beautiful child, and they were not afraid to disobey the king's order.

24It was faith that made Moses, when he was grown, refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. 25He preferred to suffer with God's people rather than to enjoy sin for a little while. 26He reckoned that to suffer scorn for the Messiah was worth far more than all the treasures of Egypt; because he kept his eyes on the future reward.

27It was faith that made Moses leave Egypt without being afraid of the king's anger; he would not turn back, as though he saw the invisible God. 28It was faith that made him establish the Passover and order the blood sprinkled on the doors, so that the Angel of Death would not kill the firstborn sons of the Israelites.

29It was faith that enabled the Israelites to cross the Red Sea as if on dry land; when the Egyptians tried to do it, the water swallowed them up.

30It was faith that made the walls of Jericho fall down, after the Israelites had marched around them for seven days. 31It was faith that kept the harlot

Rahab from being killed with those who disobeyed God, because she gave the spies a friendly welcome.
[32]Should I go on? There isn't enough time for me to

To cross the Red Sea as if on dry land

speak of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets. [33]Through faith they fought whole countries and won. They did what was right and received what God had promised. They shut the mouths of lions, [34]put out fierce fires, escaped being killed by the sword. They were weak but became strong; they were mighty in battle and defeated the armies of foreigners. [35]Through faith women received their dead raised back to life.

Others, refusing to accept freedom, died under torture in order to be raised to a better life. [36]Some were mocked and whipped, and others were tied up and put in prison. [37]They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went around clothed in skins of sheep or goats, poor, persecuted, and mistreated. [38]The world was not good enough for them! They wandered like refugees in the deserts and hills, living in caves and holes in the ground.

[39]What a record all of these have won by their faith! Yet they did not receive what God had promised, [40]because God had decided on an even better plan for us. His purpose was that they would be made perfect only with us.

God Our Father

12 As for us, we have this large crowd of witnesses around us. Let us rid ourselves, then, of everything that gets in the way, and the sin which holds on to us so tightly, and let us run with determination the

race that lies before us. [2]Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from beginning to end. He did not give up because of the cross! On the contrary, because of the joy that was waiting for him, he thought nothing of the disgrace of dying on the cross, and is now seated at the right side of God's throne.

[3]Think of what he went through, how he put up with so much hatred from sinful men! So do not let yourselves become discouraged and give up. [4]For in your struggle against sin you have not yet had to fight to the point of being killed. [5]Have you forgotten the encouraging words which God speaks to you as his sons?

"My son, pay attention when the Lord
punishes you,
and do not be discouraged when he
rebukes you.
[6] Because the Lord punishes everyone he
loves,
and chastises everyone he accepts as a
son."

[7]Endure what you suffer as being a father's punishment; because your suffering shows that God is treating you as his sons. Was there ever a son who was not punished by his father? [8]If you are not punished as all his sons are, it means you are not real sons, but bastards. [9]In the case of our human fathers, they punished us and we respected them. How much more, then, should we submit to our spiritual Father and live! [10]Our human fathers punished us for a short time, as it seemed right to them. But God does it for our own good, so that we may share his holiness. [11]When we are punished, it seems to us at the time something to make us sad, not glad. Later, however, those who have been disciplined by such punishment reap the peaceful reward of a righteous life.

Instructions and Warnings

[12]Lift up your limp hands, then, and strengthen your weak knees! [13]Keep walking on straight paths, so that the lame foot may not be disabled, but instead be healed.

[14]Try to be at peace with all men, and try to live a holy life, because no one will see the Lord without it. [15]Be

careful that no one turns back from the grace of God. Be careful that no one becomes like a bitter plant that grows up and troubles many with its poison. [16]Be careful that no one becomes immoral or unspiritual like Esau, who for a single meal sold his rights as the older son. [17]Afterward, you know, he wanted to receive his father's blessing; but he was turned back, because he could not find a way to change what he had done, even though he looked for it with tears.

[18]You have not come, as the people of Israel came, to what you can feel, to Mount Sinai with its blazing fire, the darkness and the gloom, the storm, [19]the noise of a trumpet, and the sound of a voice. When the people heard the voice they begged not to have to hear another word, [20]because they could not bear the order which said, "If even an animal touches the mountain it must be stoned to death." [21]The sight was so terrible that Moses said, "I am trembling and afraid!"

[22]Instead, you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, with its thousands of angels. [23]You have come to the joyful gathering of God's oldest sons, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, who is the judge of all men, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect. [24]You have come to Jesus, who arranged the new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that tells of much better things than Abel's blood.

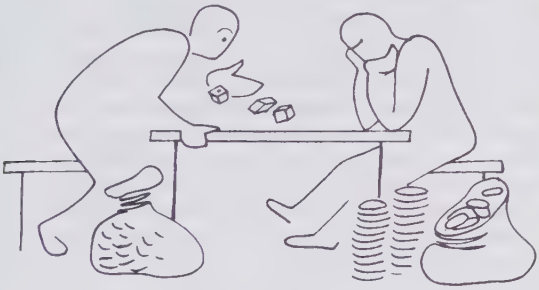
[25]Be careful, then, and do not refuse to hear him who speaks. Those who refused to hear him who gave the divine message on earth did not escape. How much less shall we escape, then, if we turn away from him who speaks from heaven! [26]His voice shook the earth at that time, but now he has promised, "I will once more shake not only the earth but heaven as well." [27]The words "once more" plainly show that the created things will be shaken and removed, so that the things that are not shaken will remain.

[28]Let us be thankful, then, because we receive a kingdom that cannot be shaken. Let us be grateful and worship God in a way that will please him, with reverence and fear; [29]because our God is indeed a destroying fire.

How to Please God

13 Keep on loving one another as brothers in Christ.
[2]Remember to welcome strangers in your homes.
There were some who did it and welcomed angels without knowing it. [3]Remember those who are in prison, as
though you were in prison with them. Remember those
who are suffering, as though you were suffering as they
are.

[4]Marriage should be honored by all, and husbands
and wives must be faithful to each other. God will
judge those who are immoral and those who commit
adultery.



Free from the love of money

[5]Keep your lives free from the love of money, and
be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, "I
will never leave you; I will never abandon you." [6]Let
us be bold, then, and say,

"The Lord is my helper,
I will not be afraid.
What can man do to me?"

[7]Remember your former leaders, who spoke God's
message to you. Think back on how they lived and
died, and imitate their faith. [8]Jesus Christ is the same
yesterday, today, and forever. [9]Do not let all kinds of
strange teachings lead you from the right way. It is
good for our souls to be made strong by God's grace,
not by obeying rules about foods; those who obey
these rules have not been helped by them.

There is no permanent city for us here on earth

[10]The priests who serve in the Jewish tent have no
right to eat of the sacrifice on our altar. [11]The Jewish
High Priest brings the blood of the animals into the
Most Holy Place to offer it as a sacrifice for sins; but
the bodies of the animals are burned outside the camp.
[12]For this reason Jesus also died outside the city gate,
in order to cleanse the people from sin with his own
blood. [13]Let us, then, go to him outside the camp and
share his shame. [14]For there is no permanent city for
us here on earth; we are looking for the city which is
to come. [15]Let us, then, always offer praise to God as
our sacrifice through Jesus, which is the offering pre-
sented by lips that confess his name. [16]Do not forget
to do good and to help one another, because these are
the sacrifices that please God.

[17]Obey your leaders and follow their orders. They
watch over your souls without resting, since they must
give an account of their service to God. If you obey
them, they will do their work gladly; else they will do
it with sadness, and that would not be of any help to
you.

[18]Keep on praying for us. We are sure we have a
clear conscience, because we want to do the right thing
at all times. [19]And I beg you all the more to pray that
God will send me back to you the sooner.

Prayer

[20]God has raised from the dead our Lord Jesus, who
is the Great Shepherd of the sheep because of his death,
by which the eternal covenant is sealed. [21]May the God

of peace provide you with every good thing you need in order to do his will, and may he, through Jesus Christ, do in us what pleases him. And to Christ be the glory forever and ever! Amen.

Final Words

[22]I beg you, my brothers, to listen patiently to this message of encouragement; for this letter I have written you is not very long. [23]I want you to know that our brother Timothy has been let out of prison. If he comes soon enough, I will have him with me when I see you.

[24]Give our greetings to all your leaders and to all God's people. The brothers from Italy send you their greetings.

[25]May God's grace be with you all.

THE LETTER FROM JAMES

1 From James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ:

Greetings to all God's people, scattered over the whole world.

Faith and Wisdom

[2]My brothers! Consider yourselves fortunate when all kinds of trials come your way, [3]because you know that when your faith succeeds in facing such trials, the result is the ability to endure. [4]Be sure that your endurance carries you all the way, without failing, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. [5]But if any of you lacks wisdom, he should pray to God, who will give it to him; because God gives generously and graciously to all. [6]But you must believe when you pray, and not doubt at all. Whoever doubts is like a wave in the sea that is driven and blown about by the wind. [7-8]Such a person is a hypocrite, undecided in all he does, and he must not think that he will receive anything from the Lord.

Poverty and Riches

[9]The poor brother must be glad when God lifts him up, [10]and the rich brother when God brings him down. For the rich will pass away like the bloom of a wild plant. [11]The sun rises with its blazing heat and burns the plant; its bloom falls off, and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way the rich man will be destroyed while busy conducting his affairs.

Testing and Tempting

[12]Happy is the man who remains faithful under trials, because when he succeeds in passing the test he will receive as his reward the life which God has promised to those who love him. [13]If a man is tempted by such testing, he must not say, "This temptation comes from God." For God cannot be tempted by evil, and he himself tempts no one. [14]But a person is tempted when he is drawn away and trapped by his own evil desire.

15 Then his evil desire conceives and gives birth to sin;
and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.
16 Do not be deceived, my dear brothers! 17 Every
good gift and every perfect present comes from
heaven; it comes down from God, the Creator of the
heavenly lights. He himself does not change or cause
darkness by turning. 18 By his own will he brought us
into being through the word of truth, so that we should
have first place among all his creatures.

Hearing and Doing

19 Remember this, my dear brothers! Everyone must
be quick to listen, but slow to speak, and slow to become
angry. 20 Man's anger does not achieve God's righteous
purpose. 21 Rid yourselves, then, of every filthy habit and
all wicked conduct. Submit to God and accept the word
that he plants in your hearts, which is able to save
you.

22 Do not fool yourselves by just listening to his word.
Instead, put it into practice. 23 Whoever listens to the
word but does not put it into practice is like a man who
looks in a mirror and sees himself as he is. 24 He takes
a good look at himself and then goes away, and at once
forgets what he looks like. 25 But whoever looks closely
into the perfect law that sets men free, who keeps on
paying attention to it, and does not simply listen and

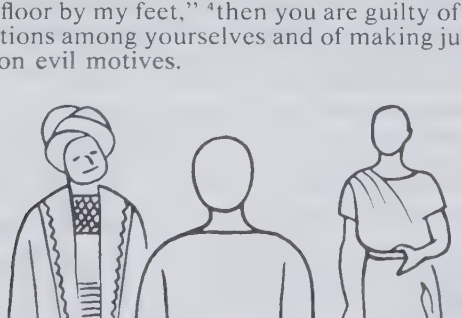
Take care of orphans and widows

then forget it, but puts it into practice—that person will be blessed by God in what he does.

[26]Does anyone think he is a religious man? If he does not control his tongue his religion is worthless and he deceives himself. [27]What God the Father considers to be pure and genuine religion is this: to take care of orphans and widows in their suffering, and to keep oneself from being corrupted by the world.

Warning against Prejudice

2 My brothers! As believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, you must never treat people in different ways, according to their outward appearance. [2]Suppose a rich man wearing a gold ring and fine clothes comes to your meeting, and a poor man in ragged clothes also comes. [3]If you show more respect to the well-dressed man and say to him, "Have this best seat here," but say to the poor man, "Stand, or sit down here on the floor by my feet," [4]then you are guilty of creating distinctions among yourselves and of making judgments based on evil motives.



God chose the poor

[5]Listen, my dear brothers! God chose the poor people of this world to be rich in faith and to possess the Kingdom which he promised to those who love him. [6]But you dishonor the poor! Who are the ones who oppress you and drag you before the judges? The rich!

[7]They are the ones who speak evil of that good name which has been given to you.

[8]You will be doing the right thing if you obey the law of the Kingdom, which is found in the scripture, "Love your fellow-man as yourself." [9]But if you treat people according to their outward appearance, you are guilty of sin, and the Law condemns you as a lawbreaker. [10]Whoever breaks one command of the Law is guilty of breaking them all. [11]For the same one who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Even if you do not commit adultery, you have become a lawbreaker if you murder. [12]Speak and act as people who will be judged by the law that sets men free. [13]For God will not show mercy when he judges the man who has not been merciful; but mercy triumphs over judgment.

Faith and Actions

[14]My brothers! What good is it for someone to say, "I have faith," if his actions do not prove it? Can that faith save him? [15]Suppose there are brothers or sisters who need clothes and don't have enough to eat. [16]What good is there in your saying to them, "God bless you! Keep warm and eat well!"—if you don't give them the necessities of life? [17]So it is with faith: if it is alone and has no actions with it, then it is dead.

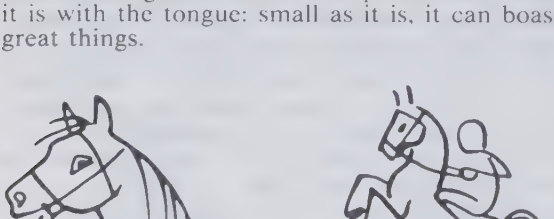
[18]But someone will say, "One person has faith, another has actions." My answer is, "Show me how anyone can have faith without actions. I will show you my faith by my actions." [19]Do you believe that there is only one God? Good! The demons also believe—and tremble with fear. [20]You fool! Do you want to be shown that faith without actions is useless? [21]How was our ancestor Abraham put right with God? It was through his actions, when he offered his son Isaac on the altar. [22]Can't you see? His faith and his actions worked together; his faith was made perfect through his actions. [23]And the scripture came true that said, "Abraham believed God, and because of his faith God accepted him as righteous." And so Abraham was called God's friend. [24]You see, then, that a man is put right with God by what he does, and not because of his faith alone.

[25]It was the same with the prostitute Rahab. She was put right with God through her actions, by welcoming the Jewish messengers and helping them escape by a different road.

[26]So then, as the body without the spirit is dead, also faith without actions is dead.

The Tongue

3 My brothers! Not many of you should become teachers, because you know that we teachers will be judged with greater strictness than others. [2]All of us often make mistakes. The person who never makes a mistake in what he says is perfect, able also to control his whole being. [3]We put a bit into the mouth of a horse to make it obey us, and we are able to make it go where we want. [4]Or think of a ship: big as it is, and driven by such strong winds, it can be steered by a very small rudder, and goes wherever the pilot wants it to go. [5]So it is with the tongue: small as it is, it can boast about great things.



Man is able to tame

Just think how large a forest can be set on fire by a tiny flame! [6]And the tongue is like a fire. It is a world of wrong, occupying its place in our bodies and spreading evil through our whole being. It sets on fire the entire course of our existence with the fire that comes to it from hell itself. [7]Man is able to tame, and has tamed, all other creatures- wild animals and birds, reptiles and fish. [8]But no man has ever been able to tame the tongue. It is evil and uncontrollable, full of deadly poison. [9]We use it to give thanks to our Lord and Father, and also

to curse our fellow-men, created in the likeness of God.
10 Words of thanksgiving and cursing pour out from the
same mouth. My brothers! This should not happen!
11 No spring of water pours out sweet and bitter water
from the same opening. 12 A fig tree, my brothers, cannot
bear olives; a grapevine cannot bear figs; nor can salty
water produce fresh water.

The Wisdom from Above

13 Is there someone among you who is wise and under-
standing? He is to prove it by his good life, by his good
deeds performed with humility and wisdom. 14 But if in
your heart you are jealous, bitter, and selfish, then you
must not be proud and tell lies against the truth. 15 This
kind of wisdom does not come down from heaven; it
belongs to the world, it is unspiritual and demonic.
16 Where there is jealousy and selfishness, there is also
disorder and every kind of evil. 17 But the wisdom from
above is pure, first of all; it is also peaceful, gentle, and
friendly; it is full of compassion and produces a harvest
of good deeds; it is free from prejudice and hypocrisy.
18 And goodness is the harvest that is produced from the
seeds the peacemakers plant in peace.

Friendship with the World

4 Where do all the fights and quarrels among you
come from? They come from your desires for pleas-
ure, which are constantly fighting within your bodies.
2 You want things, but you cannot have them, so you are
ready to kill; you strongly desire things, but you cannot
get them, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have what
you want because you do not ask God for it. 3 And when
you ask you do not receive it, because your motives are
bad; you ask for things to use for your own pleasures.
4 Unfaithful people! Don't you know that to be the
world's friend means to be God's enemy? Whoever
wants to be the world's friend makes himself God's
enemy. 5 Do not think that the scripture means nothing
that says, "The spirit that God placed in us is filled with
fierce desires." 6 But the grace that God gives is even
stronger. As the scripture says, "God resists the proud,
but gives grace to the humble."

7So then, submit yourselves to God. Resist the Devil,
and he will run away from you. 8Come near to God, and
he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners!
Cleanse your hearts, you hypocrites! 9Be sorrowful, cry,
and weep; change your laughter into crying, your joy
into gloom! 10Humble yourselves before the Lord, and
he will lift you up.

Warning against Judging a Brother

11Do not criticize one another, my brothers. Whoever
criticizes his brother, or judges him, criticizes the Law
and judges it. If you judge the Law, then you are no
longer one who obeys the Law, but one who judges it.
12God is the only lawgiver and judge. He alone can save
and destroy. Who do you think you are, to judge your
fellow-man?

Warning against Boasting

13Now listen to me, you that say, "Today or tomor-
row we will travel to a certain city, where we will stay
a year, and go into business and make a lot of money."
14You don't even know what your life tomorrow will be!
You are like a thin fog, which appears for a moment and
then disappears. 15What you should say is this, "If the
Lord is willing, we will live and do this or that." 16But
now you are proud, and you boast; all such boasting is
wrong.
17So then, the person who does not do the good he
knows he should do is guilty of sin.

Warning to the Rich

5 And now, you rich people, listen to me! Weep and
wail over the miseries that are coming upon you!
2Your riches have rotted away, and your clothes have
been eaten by moths. 3Your gold and silver are covered
with rust, and this rust will be a witness against you, and
eat up your flesh like fire. You have piled up riches in
these last days. 4You have not paid the wages to the men
who work in your fields. Hear their complaints! The
cries of those who gather in your crops have reached the
ears of God, the Lord Almighty. 5Your life here on earth
has been full of luxury and pleasure. You have made

yourselves fat for the day of slaughter. [6]You have condemned and murdered the innocent man, and he does not resist you.

Patience and Prayer

[7]Be patient, then, my brothers, until the Lord comes. See how the farmer is patient as he waits for his land to produce precious crops. He waits patiently for the autumn and spring rains. [8]You also must be patient. Keep your hopes high, for the day of the Lord's coming is near.

[9]Do not complain against one another, my brothers, so that God will not judge you. The Judge is near, ready to come in. [10]My brothers, remember the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Take them as examples of patient endurance under suffering. [11]We call them happy because they endured. You have heard of Job's patience, and you know how the Lord provided for him in the end. For the Lord is full of mercy and compassion.

[12]Above all, my brothers, do not use an oath when you make a promise; do not swear by heaven, or by earth, or by anything else. Say only "Yes" when you mean yes, and "No" when you mean no, so that you will not come under God's judgment.

This prayer, made in faith, will heal the sick man

13 Is anyone among you in trouble? He should pray. Is
anyone happy? He should sing praises. 14 Is there anyone
who is sick? He should call the church elders, who will
pray for him and rub oil on him in the name of the Lord.
15 This prayer, made in faith, will heal the sick man; the
Lord will restore him to health, and the sins he has
committed will be forgiven. 16 So then, confess your sins
to one another, and pray for one another, so that you
will be healed. The prayer of a good man has a powerful
effect. 17 Elijah was the same kind of person that we are.
He prayed earnestly that there would be no rain, and no
rain fell on the land for three and a half years. 18 Once
again he prayed, and the sky poured out its rain and the
earth produced its crops.

19 My brothers! If one of you wanders away from the
truth, and another one brings him back again, 20 remem-
ber this: whoever turns a sinner back from his wrong
way will save that sinner's soul from death, and bring
about the forgiveness of many sins.

THE FIRST LETTER FROM PETER

1 From Peter, apostle of Jesus Christ—
To God's chosen people who live as refugees scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. [2]You were chosen according to the purpose of God the Father, and were made a holy people by his Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be cleansed by his blood.
May grace and peace be yours in full measure.

A Living Hope

[3]Let us give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! Because of his great mercy, he gave us new life by raising Jesus Christ from the dead. This fills us with a living hope, [4]and so we look forward to possess the rich blessings that God keeps for his people. He keeps them for you in heaven, where they cannot decay or spoil or fade away. [5]They are for you, who through faith are kept safe by God's power for the salvation which is ready to be revealed at the end of time.

[6]Be glad about this, even though it may now be necessary for you to be sad for a while because of the many kinds of trials you suffer. [7]Their purpose is to prove that your faith is genuine. Even gold, which can be destroyed, is tested by fire; and so your faith, which is much more precious than gold, must also be tested, that it may endure. Then you will receive praise and glory and honor on the Day when Jesus Christ is revealed. [8]You love him, although you have not seen him. You believe in him, although you do not now see him. And so you rejoice with a great and glorious joy, which words cannot express, [9]because you are receiving the purpose of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

[10]It was concerning this salvation that the prophets made careful search and investigation; and they prophesied about this gift that God would give you. [11]They tried to find out when the time would be and how it would come. This was the time to which Christ's Spirit in them pointed as the Spirit predicted the sufferings that Christ would have to endure and the glory that

would follow. 12God revealed to these prophets that their work was not for their own good, but for yours, as they spoke about those things which you have now heard from the messengers of the Good News, who announced them by the power of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. These are things which even the angels would like to understand.

A Call to Holy Living

13So then, have your minds ready for action. Keep alert, and set your hope completely on the blessing which will be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. 14Be obedient to God, and do not allow your lives to be shaped by those desires you had when you were still ignorant. 15Instead, be holy in all that you do, just as God who called you is holy. 16The scripture says, "You must be holy, because I am holy."

17You call him Father, when you pray to God, who judges all men by the same standard, according to what each one has done; so then, spend the rest of your lives here on earth in reverence for him. 18For you know what was paid to set you free from the worthless manner of life you received from your ancestors. It was not something that loses its value, such as silver or gold; 19you were set free by the costly sacrifice of Christ, who was like a lamb without defect or spot. 20He had been chosen by God before the creation of the world, and was revealed in these last days for your sake. 21Through him you believe in God, who raised him from death and gave him glory; and so your faith and hope are fixed on God.

22Now that by your obedience to the truth you have purified yourselves and have come to have a sincere love for your fellow believers, love one another earnestly with all your hearts. 23For through the living and eternal word of God you have been born again as the children of a parent who is immortal, not mortal. 24As the scripture says,

"All men are like the wild grass,
and all their glory is like its flower.
The grass dies, and its flower falls off,
25 but the word of the Lord remains
forever."

This is the word that the Good News brought to you.

The Living Stone and the Holy Nation

2 Rid yourselves, therefore, of all evil; no more lying, or hypocrisy, or jealousy, or insulting language. [2]Be like newborn babies, always thirsty for the pure spiritual milk, so that by drinking it you may grow up and be saved. [3]As the scripture says, "You have tasted the Lord's kindness."

[4]Come to the Lord, the living stone rejected as worthless by men, but chosen as valuable by God. [5]Come as living stones, and let yourselves be used in building the spiritual temple, where you will serve as holy priests to offer spiritual and acceptable sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ. [6]For the scripture says,

"I chose a valuable stone,
which now I place for the cornerstone
in Zion;
and whoever believes in him will never
be disappointed."

[7]This stone is of great value for you that believe; but for those who do not believe:

"The very stone which the builders rejected
turned out to be the most important
stone."

[8]And another scripture says,

"This is the stone that will make people
stumble,
the rock that will make them fall."

They stumbled because they did not believe in the word; such was God's will for them.

[9]But you are the chosen race, the King's priests, the holy nation, God's own people, chosen to proclaim the wonderful acts of God, who called you from the darkness into his own marvelous light. [10]At one time you were not God's people, but now you are his people; at one time you did not know God's mercy, but now you have received his mercy.

Slaves of God

[11]I appeal to you, my friends, as strangers and refugees in this world! Do not give in to bodily passions, which are always at war against the soul. [12]Your con-

duct among the heathen should be so good that when they accuse you of being evildoers they will have to recognize your good deeds, and so praise God on the Day of his coming.

[13]Submit yourselves, for the Lord's sake, to every human authority: to the Emperor, who is the supreme authority, [14]and to the governors, who have been sent by him to punish the evildoers and praise those who do good. [15]For God's will is this: he wants you to silence the ignorant talk of foolish men by the good things you do. [16]Live as free men; do not use your freedom, however, to cover up any evil, but live as God's slaves. [17]Respect all men, love your fellow believers, fear God, and respect the Emperor.

The Example of Christ's Suffering

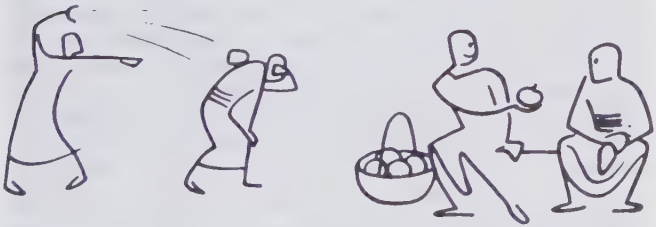
[18]You servants must submit yourselves to your masters and show them complete respect, not only to those who are kind and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. [19]God will bless you for this, if you endure the pain of undeserved suffering because you are conscious of his will. [20]For what credit is there if you endure the beatings you deserve for having done wrong? But if you endure suffering even when you have done right, God will bless you for it. [21]It was to this that God called you; because Christ himself suffered for you and left you an example, so that you would follow in his steps. [22]He committed no sin; no one ever heard a lie come from his lips. [23]When he was insulted he did not answer back with an insult; when he suffered he did not threaten, but placed his hopes in God, the righteous Judge. [24]Christ himself carried our sins in his body to the cross, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. [25]You were like sheep that had lost their way; but now you have been brought back to follow the Shepherd and Keeper of your souls.

Wives and Husbands

3 In the same way you wives must submit yourselves to your husbands, so that if some of them do not believe God's word, they will be won over to believe by

your conduct. It will not be necessary for you to say a
word, 2 because they will see how pure and reverent
your conduct is. 3 You should not use outward aids to
make yourselves beautiful, such as the way you fix your
hair, or the jewelry you put on, or the dresses you wear.
4 Instead, your beauty should consist of your true inner
self, the ageless beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which
is of the greatest value in God's sight. 5 For the devout
women of the past, who hoped in God, used to make
themselves beautiful in this way, by submitting them-
selves to their husbands. 6 Sarah was like that; she
obeyed Abraham and called him "My master." You are
now her daughters if you do good and are not afraid of
anything.

7 You husbands, also, in living with your wives you
must recognize that they are the weaker sex. So you
must treat them with respect, because they also will
receive, together with you, God's gift of life. Do this
so that nothing will interfere with your prayers.



Pay back with a blessing

Suffering for Doing Right

8 To conclude: you must all have the same thoughts
and the same feelings; love one another as brothers, and
be kind and humble with one another. 9 Do not pay back
evil with evil, or cursing with cursing; instead pay back
with a blessing, because a blessing is what God promised
to give you when he called you. 10 As the scripture says,

"Whoever wants to enjoy life
and wishes to see good times,

must keep from speaking evil
and stop telling lies.
[11] He must turn away from evil and do good;
he must seek peace and pursue it.
[12] For the Lord keeps his eyes on the right-
eous
and always listens to their prayers;
but he turns against those who do evil."

[13]Who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? [14]But even if you should suffer for doing what is right, how happy you are! Do not be afraid of men, and do not worry. [15]But have reverence for Christ in your hearts, and make him your Lord. Be ready at all times to answer anyone who asks you to explain the hope you have in you. [16]But do it with gentleness and respect. Keep your conscience clear, so that when you are insulted, those who speak evil of your good conduct as followers of Christ will be made ashamed of what they say. [17]Because it is better to suffer for doing good, if this should be God's will, than for doing wrong. [18]For Christ himself died for you; once and for all he died for sins, a good man for bad men, in order to lead you to God. He was put to death physically, but made alive spiritually, [19]and in his spiritual existence he went and preached to the imprisoned spirits. [20]These were the spirits of those who had not obeyed God, when he waited patiently during the days that Noah was building the ark. The few people in the ark—eight in all—were saved by the water, [21]which was a figure pointing to baptism, which now saves you. It is not the washing off of bodily dirt, but the promise made to God from a good conscience. It saves you through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, [22]who has gone to heaven and is at the right side of God, ruling over all angels and heavenly authorities and powers.

Changed Lives

4 Since Christ suffered physically, you too must strengthen yourselves with the same way of thinking; because whoever suffers physically is no longer involved with sin. [2]From now on, then, you must live the

rest of your earthly lives controlled by God's will, not by human desires. [3]You have spent enough time in the past doing what the heathen like to do. Your lives were spent in indecency, lust, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and the disgusting worship of idols. [4]And now the heathen are surprised when you do not join them in the same wild and reckless living, and so they insult you. [5]But they will give an account of themselves to God, who is ready to judge the living and the dead. [6]That is why the Good News was preached also to the dead, to those who had been judged in their physical existence as all men are judged; it was preached to them so that in their spiritual existence they may live as God lives.

Good Managers of God's Gifts

[7]The end of all things is near. You must be self-controlled and alert, to be able to pray. [8]Above everything, love one another earnestly because love covers over many sins. [9]Open your homes to each other, without complaining. [10]Each one, as a good manager of God's different gifts, must use for the good of others the special gift he has received from God. [11]Whoever preaches, must preach God's words; whoever serves, must serve with the strength that God gives him, so that in all things praise may be given to God through Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and power forever and ever. Amen.

Suffering as a Christian

[12]My dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful test you are suffering, as though something unusual were happening to you. [13]Rather be glad that you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may be full of joy when his glory is revealed. [14]Happy are you if you are insulted because you are Christ's followers; this means that the glorious Spirit, the Spirit of God, is resting on you. [15]None of you should suffer because he is a murderer, or a thief, or a criminal, or tries to manage other people's business. [16]But if you suffer because you are a Christian, don't be ashamed of it, but thank God that you bear Christ's name.

17 The time has come for the judgment to begin, and
God's own people are the first to be judged. If it starts
with us, how will it end with those who do not believe
the Good News from God? 18 As the scripture says,

"It is difficult for good men to be saved;
what, then, will become of the godless
and sinful?"

19 So then, those who suffer because it is God's will for
them, should by their good actions trust themselves
completely to their Creator, who always keeps his
promise.

The Flock of God

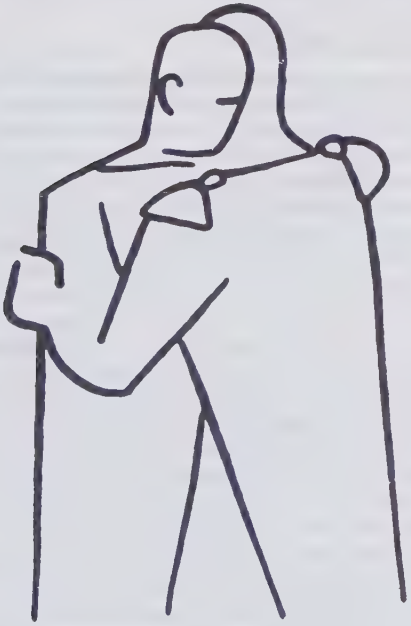
5 I appeal to the church elders among you, I who am
an elder myself. I am a witness of Christ's suffer-
ings, and I will share in the glory that will be revealed.
I appeal to you: 2 be shepherds of the flock that God gave
you, and look after it willingly, as God wants you to, and
not unwillingly. Do your work, not for mere pay, but
from a real desire to serve. 3 Do not try to rule over those
who have been given into your care, but be examples to
the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you
will receive the glorious crown which will never lose its
brightness.

5 In the same way, you younger men must submit
yourselves to the older men. And all of you must put on
the apron of humility, to serve one another; for the
scripture says, "God resists the proud, but gives grace
to the humble." 6 Humble yourselves, then, under God's
mighty hand, so that he will lift you up in his own good
time. 7 Throw all your worries on him, because he cares
for you.

8 Be alert, be on watch! Your enemy, the Devil, roams
around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to de-
vour. 9 Be firm in your faith and resist him, because you
know that your fellow believers in all the world are
going through the same kind of sufferings. 10 But after
you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace,
who calls you to share his eternal glory in union with
Christ, will himself perfect you, and give you firmness,
strength, and a sure foundation. 11 To him be the power
forever! Amen.

Final Greetings

12 I write you this brief letter with the help of Silas,
whom I regard as a faithful brother. I want to encourage
you and give my testimony that this is the true grace of
God. Stand firm in it.
13 Your sister church in Babylon, also chosen by God,
sends you greetings, and so does my son Mark. 14 Greet
each other with the kiss of Christian love.
May peace be with all of you who belong to Christ.



The kiss of Christian love

THE SECOND LETTER FROM PETER

1 From Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ—

To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have been given a faith as precious as ours:

[2]May grace and peace be yours in full measure, through your knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

God's Call and Choice

[3]God's divine power has given us everything we need to live a godly life through our knowledge of the one who called us to share his own glory and goodness. [4]In this way he has given us the very great and precious gifts he promised, so that by means of these gifts you may escape from the destructive lust that is in the world, and come to share the divine nature. [5]For this very reason do your best to add goodness to your faith; to your goodness add knowledge; [6]to your knowledge add self-control; to your self-control add endurance; to your endurance add godliness; [7]to your godliness add brotherly love; and to your brotherly love add love. [8]These are the qualities you need, and if you have them in abundance they will make you active and effective in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. [9]But whoever does not have them is so shortsighted that he cannot see, and has forgotten that his past sins have been washed away.

[10]So then, my brothers, try even harder to make God's call and his choice of you a permanent experience; if you do so, you will never fall away. [11]In this way you will be given the full right to enter the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

[12]For this reason I will always remind you of these matters, even though you already know them and are firmly fixed in the truth you have received. [13]I think it only right for me to stir up your memory of these matters, as long as I am still alive. [14]I know that I shall soon put off this mortal body, as our Lord Jesus Christ plainly told me. [15]I will do my best, then, to provide a way for

you to remember these matters at all times after my death.

Eyewitnesses of Christ's Glory

16 We have not depended on made-up legends in making known to you the mighty coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. With our own eyes we saw his greatness. 17 We were there when he was given honor and glory by God the Father, when the voice came to him from the Supreme Glory, saying, "This is my own dear Son, with whom I am well pleased!" 18 We ourselves heard this voice coming from heaven, when we were with him on the sacred mountain.

19 So we are even more confident of the message proclaimed by the prophets. You will do well to pay attention to it, because it is like a lamp shining in a dark place, until the Day dawns and the light of the morning star shines in your hearts. 20 Above all else, however, remember this: no one can explain, by himself, a prophecy in the Scriptures. 21 For no prophetic message ever came just from the will of man, but men were carried along by the Holy Spirit as they spoke the message that came from God.

False Teachers

2 False prophets appeared in the past among the people, and in the same way false teachers will appear among you. They will bring in destructive, untrue doctrines, and deny the Master who redeemed them, and so bring upon themselves sudden destruction. 2 Even so, many will follow their immoral ways; and, because of what they do, people will speak evil of the Way of truth. 3 In their greed these false teachers will make a profit out of telling you made-up stories. For a long time now their Judge has been ready, and their Destroyer has been wide awake!

4 God did not spare the angels who sinned, but threw them into hell, where they are kept chained in darkness, waiting for the Day of Judgment. 5 God did not spare the ancient world, but brought the Flood on the world of godless men; the only ones he saved were Noah, who preached righteousness, and seven other people. 6 God

condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, destroying them with fire, and made them an example of what will happen to the godless. [7]He rescued Lot, a good man, who was troubled by the immoral conduct of lawless men. [8]That good man lived among them and day after day saw and heard such things that his good heart was tormented by their evil actions. [9]And so the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from their trials, and how to keep the wicked under punishment for the Day of Judgment, [10]especially those who follow their filthy bodily lusts and despise God's authority.

These false teachers are bold and arrogant, and show no respect for the glorious beings above; instead, they insult them. [11]Even the angels, who are so much stronger and mightier than these false teachers, do not accuse them with insults in the presence of the Lord. [12]But these men act by instinct, like wild animals born to be captured and killed; they insult things they do not understand. They will be destroyed like wild animals; [13]they will be paid with suffering for the suffering they caused. Pleasure for them is to do anything in broad daylight that will satisfy their bodily appetites; they are a shame and a disgrace as they join you in your meals, all the while enjoying their deceitful ways! [14]They want to look at nothing else but immoral women; their appetite for sin is never satisfied. They lead weak people into a trap. Their hearts are trained to be greedy. They are under God's curse! [15]They have left the straight path and have lost their way; they have followed the path taken by Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the money he would get for doing wrong, [16]and was rebuked for his sin. A dumb ass spoke with a human voice and stopped the prophet's insane action.

[17]These men are like dried-up springs, like clouds blown along by a storm; God has reserved a place for them in the deepest darkness. [18]They make proud and stupid statements, and use immoral bodily lusts to trap those who are just beginning to escape from among people who live in error. [19]They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of destructive habits—for a man is a slave of anything that has conquered him. [20]If men have escaped from the corrupting

forces of the world through their knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and then are again caught and conquered by them, such men are in worse condition at the end than they were at the beginning. [21]It would have been much better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than to know it and then turn away from the sacred command that was given them. [22]What happened to them shows that the proverb is true, "A dog goes back to what it has vomited," and, "A pig that has been washed goes back to roll in the mud."

The proverb is true

The Promise of the Lord's Coming

3 My dear friends! This is now the second letter I have written you. In both letters I have tried to arouse pure thoughts in your minds by reminding you of these things. [2]I want you to remember the words that were spoken long ago by the holy prophets, and the command from the Lord and Savior which was given you by your apostles. [3]First of all, you must understand that in the last days some men will appear whose lives are controlled by their own lusts. They will make fun of you [4]and say, "He promised to come, didn't he? Where is he? Our fathers have already died, but everything is still the same as it was since the creation of the world!" [5]They purposely ignore the fact that long ago God spoke, and the heavens and earth were created. The earth was formed out of water, and by water, [6]and it was by water also, the water of the Flood, that the old world was destroyed. [7]But the heavens and earth that now exist are being preserved, by the same word of God, for

destruction by fire. They are being kept for the day when godless men will be judged and destroyed.

[8]But do not forget this one thing, my dear friends! There is no difference in the Lord's sight between one day and a thousand years; to him the two are the same. [9]The Lord is not slow to do what he has promised, as some think. Instead, he is patient with you, because he does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants all to turn away from their sins.

[10]But the Day of the Lord will come as a thief. On that Day the heavens will disappear with a shrill noise, the heavenly bodies will burn up and be destroyed, and the earth with everything in it will vanish. [11]Since all these things will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people should you be? Your lives should be holy and dedicated to God, [12]as you wait for the Day of God, and do your best to make it come soon—the Day when the heavens will burn up and be destroyed, and the heavenly bodies will be melted by the heat. [13]But we wait for what God has promised: new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness will be at home.

[14]And so, my friends, as you wait for that Day, do your best to be pure and faultless in God's sight and to be at peace with him. [15]Look on our Lord's patience as the opportunity he gives you to be saved, just as our dear brother Paul wrote to you, using the wisdom God gave him. [16]This is what he says in all his letters, when he writes on this subject. There are some difficult things in his letters which ignorant and unstable people explain falsely, as they do with other passages of the Scriptures. So they bring on their own destruction.

[17]But you, my friends, already know this. Be on your guard, then, so that you will not be led away by the errors of lawless men and fall from your safe position. [18]But continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory, now and forever! Amen.

THE FIRST LETTER OF JOHN

The Word of Life

1 We write to you about the Word of life, which has
existed from the very beginning: we have heard it,
and we have seen it with our eyes; yes, we have seen it,
and our hands have touched it. 2When this life became
visible, we saw it; so we speak of it and tell you about
the eternal life which was with the Father and was made
known to us. 3What we have seen and heard we tell to
you also, so that you will join with us in the fellowship
that we have with the Father and with his Son Jesus
Christ. 4We write this in order that our joy may be
complete.

God Is Light

5Now this is the message that we have heard from his
Son and announce to you: God is light and there is no
darkness at all in him. 6If, then, we say that we have
fellowship with him, yet at the same time live in the
darkness, we are lying both in our words and in our
actions. 7But if we live in the light—just as he is in the
light—then we have fellowship with one another, and
the blood of Jesus, his Son, makes us clean from every
sin.

8If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves
and there is no truth in us. 9But if we confess our sins
to God, he will keep his promise and do what is right:
he will forgive us our sins and make us clean from all our
wrongdoing. 10If we say that we have not sinned, we
make a liar out of God, and his word is not in us.

Christ Our Helper

2 I write you this, my children, so that you will not
sin; but if anyone does sin, we have Jesus Christ, the
righteous, who pleads for us with the Father. 2And
Christ himself is the means by which our sins are for-
given, and not our sins only, but also the sins of all
men.

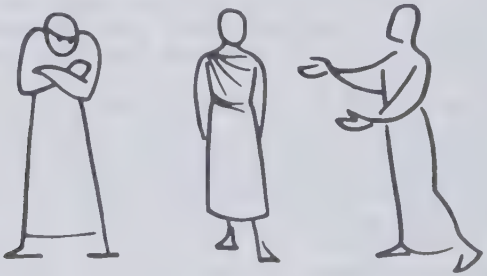
3If we obey God's commands, then we are sure that
we know him. 4If someone says, "I do know him," but

does not obey his commands, such a person is a liar and there is no truth in him. [5]But whoever obeys his word is the one whose love for God has really been made perfect. This is how we can be sure that we live in God: [6]whoever says that he lives in God should live just as Jesus Christ did.

The New Command

[7]My dear friends, this command I write you is not new; it is the old command, the one you have had from the very beginning. The old command is the message you have already heard. [8]However, the command I write you is new, and its truth is seen in Christ and also in you. For the darkness is passing away, and the real light is already shining.

[9]Whoever says that he is in the light, yet hates his brother, is in the darkness to this very hour. [10]Whoever loves his brother stays in the light, and so there is nothing in him that will cause someone else to sin. [11]But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness; he walks in it and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has made him blind.



Whoever loves his brother stays in the light

[12]I write to you, my children, because your sins are forgiven for the sake of Christ's name. [13]I write to you, fathers, because you know him who has existed from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have defeated the Evil One.

[14]I write to you, children, because you know the Father. I write to you, fathers, because you know him who has existed from the beginning. I write to you,

young men, because you are strong; the word of God lives in you and you have defeated the Evil One.

[15]Do not love the world or anything that belongs to the world. If you love the world, you do not have the love for the Father in you. [16]Everything that belongs to the world—what the sinful self desires, what people see and want, and everything in this world that people are so proud of—none of this comes from the Father; it all comes from the world. [17]The world and everything in it that men desire is passing away; but he who does what God wants lives forever.

The Enemy of Christ

[18]My children, the end is near! You were told that the Enemy of Christ would come; and now many enemies of Christ have already appeared, and so we know that the end is near. [19]These people really did not belong to our group, and that is why they left us; if they had belonged to our group, they would have stayed with us. But they left so that it might be clear that none of them really belonged to our group.

[20]But you have had the Holy Spirit poured out on you by Christ, and so all of you know the truth. [21]I write you, then, not because you do not know the truth; instead, it is because you do know it, and also know that no lie ever comes from the truth.

[22]Who, then, is the liar? It is he who says that Jesus is not the Christ. This one is the Enemy of Christ—he rejects both the Father and the Son. [23]For whoever rejects the Son also rejects the Father; whoever accepts the Son has the Father also.

[24]Be sure, then, to keep in your hearts the message you heard from the beginning. If you keep what you heard from the beginning, then you will always live in union with the Son and the Father. [25]And this is what Christ himself promised to give us—eternal life.

[26]I write you this about those who are trying to deceive you. [27]But as for you, Christ has poured out his Spirit on you. As long as his Spirit remains in you, you do not need anyone to teach you. For his Spirit teaches you about everything, and what he teaches is true, not

false. Obey the Spirit's teaching, then, and remain in Christ.

[28]Yes, my children, remain in him, so that we may be full of courage when he appears and need not hide in shame from him on the Day he comes. [29]You know that Christ is righteous; you should know, then, that everyone who does what is right is God's child.

Children of God

3 See how much the Father has loved us! His love is so great that we are called God's children —and so, in fact, we are. This is why the world does not know us: it has not known God. [2]My dear friends, we are now God's children, but it is not yet clear what we shall become. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall become like him, because we shall see him as he really is. [3]Everyone who has this hope in Christ keeps himself pure, just as Christ is pure.

[4]Whoever sins is guilty of breaking God's law; because sin is a breaking of the law. [5]You know that Christ appeared in order to take away men's sins, and that there is no sin in him. [6]So everyone who lives in Christ does not continue to sin; but whoever continues to sin has never seen him or known him.

[7]Let no one deceive you, children! Whoever does what is right is righteous, just as Christ is righteous. [8]Whoever continues to sin belongs to the Devil, because the Devil has sinned from the very beginning. The Son of God appeared for this very reason, to destroy the Devil's works.

[9]Whoever is a child of God does not continue to sin, because God's very nature is in him; and because God is his Father, he cannot continue to sin. [10]Here is the clear difference between God's children and the Devil's children: anyone who does not do what is right, or does not love his brother, is not God's child.

Love One Another

[11]The message you heard from the very beginning is this: we must love one another. [12]We must not be like Cain; he belonged to the Evil One, and murdered his own brother. Why did Cain murder him? Because the

things he did were wrong, but the things his brother did were right.

[13]So do not be surprised, my brothers, if the people of the world hate you. [14]We know that we have left death and come over into life; we know it because we love our brothers. Whoever does not love is still in death. [15]Whoever hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that a murderer does not have eternal life in him. [16]This is how we know what love is: Christ gave his life for us. We too, then, ought to give our lives for our brothers! [17]If a man is rich and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against his brother, how can he claim that he has love for God in his heart? [18]My children! Our love should not be just words and talk; it must be true love, which shows itself in action.

Courage before God

[19]This, then, is how we will know that we belong to the truth. This is how our hearts will be confident in God's presence. [20]If our heart condemns us, we know that God is greater than our heart, and that he knows everything. [21]And so, my dear friends, if our heart does not condemn us, we have courage in God's presence. [22]We receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him. [23]This is what he commands: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as Christ commanded us. [24]Whoever obeys God's commands lives in God and God lives in him. And this is how we know that God lives in us: we know it because of the Spirit he has given us.

The True and the False Spirit

4 My dear friends: do not believe all who claim to have the Spirit, but test them to find out if the spirit they have comes from God. For many false prophets have gone out everywhere. [2]This is how you will be able to know whether it is God's Spirit: anyone who declares that Jesus Christ came as a human being has the Spirit who comes from God. [3]But anyone who denies this about Jesus does not have the Spirit from God. This

spirit is from the Enemy of Christ; you heard that it would come, and now it is here in the world already.

[4]But you belong to God, my children, and have defeated the false prophets; because the Spirit who is in you is more powerful than the spirit in those who belong to the world. [5]They speak about matters of the world and the world listens to them because they belong to the world. [6]But we belong to God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever does not belong to God does not listen to us. This is the way, then, that we can tell the difference between the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

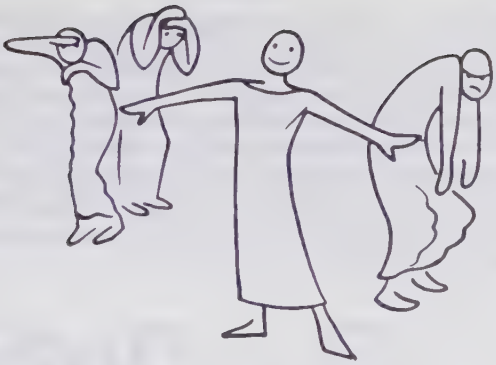
God Is Love

[7]Dear friends! Let us love one another, because love comes from God. Whoever loves is a child of God and knows God. [8]Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. [9]This is how God showed his love for us: he sent his only Son into the world that we might have life through him. [10]This is what love is: it is not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the means by which our sins are forgiven.

[11]Dear friends, if this is how God loved us, then we should love one another. [12]No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made perfect in us.

[13]This is how we are sure that we live in God and he lives in us: he has given us his Spirit. [14]And we have seen and tell others that the Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. [15]Whoever declares that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him, and he lives in God. [16]And we ourselves know and believe the love which God has for us.

God is love, and whoever lives in love lives in God and God lives in him. [17]The purpose of love being made perfect in us is that we may have courage on Judgment Day; and we will have it because our life in this world is the same as Christ's. [18]There is no fear in love; perfect love drives out all fear. So then, love has not been made perfect in the one who fears, because fear has to do with punishment.



Perfect love drives out all fear

19We love because God first loved us. 20If someone
says, "I love God," but hates his brother, he is a liar. For
he cannot love God, whom he has not seen, if he does
not love his brother, whom he has seen. 21This, then, is
the command that Christ gave us: he who loves God
must love his brother also.

Our Victory over the World

5 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Messiah is a
child of God; and whoever loves a father loves his
child also. 2This is how we know that we love God's
children: it is by loving God and obeying his commands.
3For our love for God means that we obey his com-
mands. And his commands are not too hard for us,
4because every child of God is able to defeat the world.
This is how we win the victory over the world: with our
faith. 5Who can defeat the world? Only he who believes
that Jesus is the Son of God.

The Witness about Jesus Christ

6Jesus Christ is the one who came: he came with the
water of his baptism and the blood of his death. He came
not only with the water, but with both the water and the
blood. And the Spirit himself testifies that this is true,
because the Spirit is truth. 7There are three witnesses,

[8]the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and all three agree.
[9]We believe the witness that men give; the witness that God gives is much stronger, and this is the witness that God has given about his Son. [10]So whoever believes in the Son of God has this witness in his heart; but whoever does not believe God has made a liar out of him, because he has not believed what God has said as a witness about his Son. [11]This, then, is the witness: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. [12]Whoever has the Son has this life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

Keep yourselves safe from false gods

Eternal Life

[13]I write you this so that you may know that you have eternal life—you that believe in the name of the Son of God. [14]We have courage in God's presence because we are sure that he hears us if we ask him for anything that is according to his will. [15]He hears us whenever we ask him; since we know this is true, we know also that he gives us what we ask from him.

[16]If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, he should pray to God, who will give him life. This applies to those whose sins do not lead to death. But there is sin which leads to death, and I do not say that you should pray to God about that. [17]All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin which does not lead to death.

[18]We know that no child of God keeps on sinning, because the Son of God keeps him safe, and the Evil One cannot harm him.

19 We know that we belong to God even though the
whole world is under the rule of the Evil One.
20 We know that the Son of God has come and has
given us understanding, so that we know the true God.
Our lives are in the true God—in his Son Jesus Christ.
This is the true God, and this is eternal life.
21 My children, keep yourselves safe from false gods!

THE SECOND LETTER OF JOHN

[1]From the Elder—
To the dear Lady and to her children, whom I truly love. I am not the only one, but all who know the truth love you, [2]because the truth remains in us and will be with us forever.

[3]May God the Father and Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, give us grace, mercy, and peace; may they be ours in truth and love.

Truth and Love

[4]How happy I was to find that some of your children live in the truth, just as the Father commanded us. [5]And so I ask you, dear Lady: let us all love one another. This is no new command I write you; it is the command which we have had from the beginning. [6]This love I speak of means that we must live in obedience to God's commands. The command, as you have all heard from the beginning, is this: you must all live in love.

[7]Many deceivers have gone out over the world, men who do not declare that Jesus Christ came as a human being. Such a person is a deceiver and the Enemy of Christ. [8]Watch yourselves, then, so that you will not lose what you have worked for, but will receive your reward in full.

[9]Anyone who does not stay with the teaching of Christ, but goes beyond it, does not have God. Whoever does stay with the teaching has both the Father and the Son. [10]If anyone comes to you, then, who does not bring this teaching, do not welcome him in your home; do not even say, "Peace be with you." [11]For anyone who wishes him peace becomes his partner in the evil things he does.

Final Words

[12]I have so much to tell you, but I would rather not do it with paper and ink; instead, I hope to visit you and talk with you personally, so that we shall be completely happy.

[13]The children of your dear Sister send you their greetings.

THE THIRD LETTER OF JOHN

[1]From the Elder—
To my dear Gaius, whom I truly love.
[2]My dear friend, I pray that everything may go well with you, and that you may be in good health –as I know you are well in spirit. [3]I was so happy when some brothers arrived and told how faithful you are to the truth—just as you always live in the truth. [4]Nothing makes me happier than to hear that my children live in the truth.

Gaius Is Praised

[5]My dear friend, you are so faithful in the work you do for the brothers, even when they are strangers. [6]They have spoken of your love to the church here. Please help them to continue their trip in a way that will please God. [7]For they set out on their trip in the service of Christ without accepting any help from unbelievers. [8]We Christians, then, must help these men, so that we may share in their work for the truth.

Diotrephes and Demetrius

[9]I wrote a short letter to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be their leader, will not pay any attention to what I say. [10]When I come, then, I will bring up everything he has done: the terrible things he says about us and the lies he tells! But that is not enough for him; he will not receive the brothers when they come, and even stops those who want to receive them and tries to drive them out of the church!
[11]My dear friend, do not imitate what is bad, but imitate what is good. Whoever does good belongs to God; whoever does what is bad has not seen God.
[12]Everyone speaks well of Demetrius; truth itself speaks well of him. And we add our witness, and you know that what we say is true.

Final Greetings

13 I have so much to tell you, but I do not want to do
it with pen and ink. 14 I hope to see you soon, and then
we will talk personally.
15 Peace be with you.
All your friends send greetings. Greet all our friends
personally.

THE LETTER FROM JUDE

[1]From Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ, and the brother of James—

To those who have been called by God, who live in the love of God the Father and the protection of Jesus Christ:

[2]May mercy, peace, and love be yours in full measure.

False Teachers

[3]My dear friends! I was doing my best to write to you about the salvation we share in common, when I felt the need of writing you now to encourage you to fight on for the faith which once and for all God has given to his people. [4]For some godless men have slipped in unnoticed among us, who distort the message about the grace of our God to excuse their immoral ways, and reject Jesus Christ, our only Master and Lord. Long ago the Scriptures predicted this condemnation they have received.

[5]For even though you know all this, I want to remind you of how the Lord saved the people of Israel from the land of Egypt, but afterward destroyed those who did not believe. [6]Remember the angels who did not stay within the limits of their proper authority, but abandoned their own dwelling place: they are bound with eternal chains in the darkness below, where God is keeping them for that great Day on which they will be condemned. [7]Remember Sodom and Gomorrah, and the nearby towns, whose people acted as those angels did and committed sexual immorality and perversion: they suffer the punishment of eternal fire as a plain warning to all.

[8]In the same way also, these men have visions which make them sin against their own bodies; they despise God's authority and insult the glorious beings above. [9]Not even the chief angel Michael has done this. In his quarrel with the Devil, when they argued about who would have the body of Moses, Michael did not dare condemn the Devil with insulting words, but said, "The

Lord rebuke you!" [10]But these men insult things they do not understand; and those things that they know by instinct, like wild animals, are the very things that destroy them. [11]How terrible for them! They have followed the way that Cain took. For the sake of money they have given themselves over to the error that Balaam committed. They have rebelled as Korah rebelled, and like him they are destroyed. [12]They are like dirty spots in your fellowship meals, with their shameless carousing. They take care of themselves only. They are like clouds carried along by the wind and bringing no rain. They are like trees that bear no fruit, even in autumn, trees that have been pulled up by the roots and are completely dead. [13]They are like wild waves of the sea, with their shameful deeds showing up like foam. They are like wandering stars, for whom God has reserved a place forever in the deepest darkness.

[14]It was Enoch, the sixth direct descendant from Adam, who long ago prophesied this about them: "Look! The Lord will come with many thousands of his holy angels, [15]to bring judgment on all, to condemn all godless sinners for all the godless deeds they have performed, and for all the terrible words these godless men have spoken against God!"

[16]These men are always grumbling and blaming others; they follow their own evil desires; they brag about themselves, and flatter others in order to get their own way.

Warnings and Instructions

[17]But remember, my friends! Remember what you were told in the past by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. [18]They said to you, "When the last days come, men will appear who will make fun of you, men who follow their own godless desires." [19]These are the men who cause divisions, who are controlled by their natural desires, who do not have the Spirit. [20]But you, my friends, keep on building yourselves up on your most sacred faith. Pray in the power of the Holy Spirit, [21]and keep yourselves in the love of God, as you wait for our Lord Jesus Christ in his mercy to give you eternal life.

[22]Show mercy toward those who have doubts: [23]save them, by snatching them out of the fire. Show mercy also, mixed with fear, to others as well, but hate their very clothes, stained by their sinful lusts.

Prayer of Praise

[24]To him who is able to keep you from falling and bring you faultless and joyful before his glorious presence—[25]to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, might, and authority, from all ages past, and now, and forever and ever! Amen.

THE REVELATION TO JOHN

1 This book is about what Jesus Christ revealed, which God gave him, to show to God's servants what must happen very soon. Christ made these things known to his servant John by sending his angel to him, [2]and John has told all that he has seen. This is his report concerning the message from God and the truth revealed by Jesus Christ. [3]Happy is the one who reads this book, and happy are those who listen to the words of this prophetic message and obey what is written in this book! For the time is near when all this will happen.

Greetings to the Seven Churches

[4]From John to the seven churches in the province of Asia:

Grace and peace be yours from God, who is, who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits in front of his throne, [5]and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn Son who was raised from death, who is also the ruler of the kings of earth.

He loves us, and by his death he has freed us from our sins [6]and made us a kingdom of priests to serve his God and Father. To Jesus Christ be the glory and power forever and ever! Amen.

[7]Look, he is coming with the clouds! Everyone will see him, including those who pierced him. All peoples of earth will mourn over him. Certainly so! Amen.

[8]"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God Almighty, who is, who was, and who is to come.

A Vision of Christ

[9]I am John, your brother, and in union with Jesus I share with you in suffering, and in his Kingdom, and in enduring. I was put on the island named Patmos because I had proclaimed God's word and the truth that Jesus revealed. [10]On the Lord's day the Spirit took control of me, and I heard a loud voice, that sounded like a trumpet, speaking behind me. [11]It said, "Write down what

you see, and send the book to these seven churches: in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea."

[12]I turned around to see who was talking to me. There I saw seven gold lampstands. [13]Among them stood a being who looked like a man, wearing a robe that reached to his feet, and a gold band around his chest. [14]His hair was white as wool, or as snow, and his eyes blazed like fire; [15]his feet shone like brass melted in the furnace and then polished, and his voice sounded like a mighty waterfall. [16]He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword came out of his mouth. His face was as bright as the midday sun. [17]When I saw him I fell down at his feet like a dead man. He placed his right hand on me and said, "Don't be afraid! I am the first and the last. [18]I am the living one! I was dead, but look, I am alive forever and ever. I have authority over death and the world of the dead. [19]Write, then, the things you see, both the things that are now, and the things that will happen afterward. [20]Here is the secret meaning of the seven stars that you see in my right hand, and of the seven gold lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches."

The Message to Ephesus

2 "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:
"This is the message from the one who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven gold lampstands. [2]I know what you have done; I know how hard you have worked and how patient you have been. I know that you cannot tolerate evil men, and that you have tested those who say they are apostles but are not, and have found out that they are liars. [3]You are patient, you have suffered troubles for my sake, and you have not given up. [4]But here is what I have against you: you do not love me now as you did at first. [5]Remember how far you have fallen! Turn from your sins and do what you did at first. If you don't turn from your sins, I will come to you and take your lampstand from its place. [6]But here is what you have in your favor: you hate what the Nicolaitans do, as much as I.

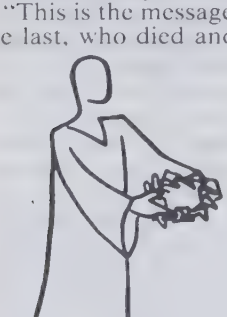
7"If you have ears, then, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches!

"To those who have won the victory I will give the right to eat the fruit of the tree of life that grows in the Garden of God."

The Message to Smyrna

8"To the angel of the church in Smyrna write:

"This is the message from the one who is the first and the last, who died and lived again. 9I know your troubles; I know that you are poor—but really you are rich! I know the evil things said against you by those who claim to be Jews, but are not; they are a group that belongs to Satan! 10Do not be afraid of anything you are about to suffer. Listen! The Devil will put you to the test by having some of you thrown into prison; your troubles will last ten days. Be faithful to me, even if it means death, and I will give you the crown of life.



The crown of life

11"If you have ears, then, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches!

"Those who win the victory will not be hurt by the second death."

The Message to Pergamum

12"To the angel of the church in Pergamum write:

"This is the message from the one who has the sharp two-edged sword. 13I know where you live, there where Satan has his throne. You are true to me, and you did not abandon your faith in me even during the time when Antipas, a faithful witness for me, was killed there where Satan lives. 14But here are a few things I have against you: there with you are some who follow the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak how to cause the people of Israel to sin by eating food that had been offered to idols,

and by committing immorality. [15]In the same way, you also have people among you who follow the teaching of the Nicolaitans. [16]Turn from your sins, then! If not, I will come to you soon and fight against those people with the sword that comes out of my mouth.

[17]"If you have ears, then, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches!

"To those who have won the victory I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give each of them a white stone, on which a new name is written, which no one knows except the one who receives it."

The Message to Thyatira

[18]"To the angel of the church in Thyatira write:

"This is the message from the Son of God, whose eyes blaze like fire, whose feet shine like polished brass. [19]I know what you do. I know your love, your faithfulness, your service, and your patience. I know that you are doing more now than you did at first. [20]But here is what I have against you: you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a messenger of God. She teaches and misleads my servants into committing immorality and eating food that has been offered to idols. [21]I have given her time to turn from her sins, but she does not wish to turn from her immorality. [22]And so I will throw her on a bed where she and those who committed adultery with her will suffer terribly. I will do this now, unless they repent from the wicked things they did with her. [23]I will also kill her followers, and then all the churches will know that I am he who knows men's thoughts and wishes. I will repay each one of you according to what you have done.

[24]"But the rest of you in Thyatira have not followed this evil teaching; you have not learned what the others call 'the deep secrets of Satan.' I say to you that I will not put any other burden on you. [25]But you must hold firmly to what you have until I come. [26-28]To those who win the victory, who continue to do what I want until the very end, I will give the same authority which I received from my Father: I will give them authority over the nations, to rule them with an iron rod and to break

them to pieces like clay pots. I will also give them the morning star.
29"If you have ears, then, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches!"

The Message to Sardis

3 "To the angel of the church in Sardis write:
"This is the message from the one who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know what you are doing; I know that you have the reputation of being alive, even though you are dead! 2So wake up, and strengthen what you still have, before it dies completely. For I find that what you have done is not yet perfect in the sight of my God. 3Remember, then, what you were taught and how you heard it; obey it, and turn from your sins. If you do not wake up, I will come upon you like a thief, and you will not even know the hour when I come. 4But a few of you there in Sardis have kept your clothes clean. You will walk with me, clothed in white, because you are worthy to do so. 5Those who win the victory will be clothed like this in white, and I will not remove their names from the book of the living. In the presence of my Father and of his angels I will declare openly that they belong to me.
6"If you have ears, then, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches!"

The Message to Philadelphia

7"To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:
"This is the message from the one who is holy and true, who holds the key that belonged to David, who opens so that none can close, who closes so that none can open. 8I know what you do; I know that you have a little power; you have followed my teaching and have been faithful to me. I have opened a door before you, which no one can close. 9Listen! As for that group that belongs to Satan, those liars who claim that they are Jews, but are not, I will make them come before you and bow down at your feet. They will all know that I love you. 10Because you have kept my order to be patient, I will also keep you safe from the time of trouble which

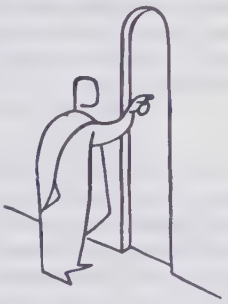
is coming upon the whole world, to test all the people on earth. 11I am coming soon. Keep safe what you have, so that no one will rob you of your victory prize. 12I will make him who is victorious a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will never again leave it. I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which will come down out of heaven from my God. I will also write on him my new name.

13"If you have ears, then, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches!"

The Message to Laodicea

14"To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

"This is the message from the Amen, the faithful and true witness, who is the origin of all that God has created. 15I know what you have done; I know that you are neither cold nor hot. How I wish you were either one or the other! 16But because you are barely warm, neither hot nor cold, I am going to spit you out of my mouth! 17'I am rich and well off,' you say, 'I have all I need.' But you do not know how miserable and pitiful you are! You are poor, naked, and blind. 18I advise you, then, to buy gold from me, pure gold, in order to be rich. Buy also white clothing to dress yourself and cover up your shameful nakedness. Buy also some medicine to put on your eyes, so that you may see. 19I reprove and punish all whom I love. Be in earnest, then, and turn from your sins. 20Listen! I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into his house and eat with him, and he will eat with me. 21To those who win the victory I will give the right to sit by me on my throne, just as I have been victorious, and now sit by my Father on his throne.



I stand at the door

22"If you have ears, then, listen to what the Spirit says to the churches!"

Worship in Heaven

4 At this point I had another vision, and saw an open door in heaven.

And the voice that sounded like a trumpet, which I had heard speaking to me before, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this." 2At once the Spirit took control of me. There in heaven was a throne, with someone sitting on it. 3His face gleamed like such precious stones as jasper and carnelian; all around the throne there was a rainbow the color of an emerald. 4In a circle around the throne were twenty-four other thrones, on which were seated twenty-four elders dressed in white and wearing gold crowns. 5From the throne came flashes of lightning, sounds, and peals of thunder. There were seven lighted torches burning before the throne; these are the seven spirits of God. 6In front of the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal.

Surrounding the throne, on each of its sides, were four living creatures covered with eyes in front and in back. 7The first living creature looked like a lion; the second looked like a calf; the third had a face like a man's face; and the fourth looked like a flying eagle. 8Each one of the four living creatures had six wings, and they were covered over with eyes, inside and out. They never stop their singing day or night:

"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God
Almighty,
who was, who is, and who is to come."

9The four living creatures sing songs of glory and honor and thanks to the one who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever. When they do so, 10the twenty-four elders fall down before the one who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives forever and ever. They throw their crowns before the throne, and say,

11"Our Lord and God! You are worthy
to receive glory, honor, and power.
For you created all things,
and by your will they were given existence and life."

The Scroll and the Lamb

5 I saw a scroll in the right hand of the one who sat
on the throne; it was covered with writing on both
sides, and was sealed with seven seals. 2And I saw a
mighty angel, who announced in a loud voice, "Who is
worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" 3But no
one was found in heaven, or on earth, or in the world
below, who could open the scroll and look inside it. 4I
cried bitterly because no one had been found who was
worthy to open the scroll or look inside it. 5Then one of
the elders said to me, "Don't cry. Look! The Lion from
Judah's tribe, the great descendant of David, has won
the victory and can break the seven seals and open the
scroll."

6Then I saw a Lamb standing in the center of the
throne, surrounded by the four living creatures and the
elders. The Lamb appeared to have been killed. It had
seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits
of God that have been sent into all the world. 7The
Lamb went and took the scroll from the right hand of
the one who sat on the throne. 8As he did so, the four
living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down
before the Lamb. Each had a harp, and gold bowls
filled with incense, which are the prayers of God's
people. 9They sang a new song:

"You are worthy to take the scroll
and to break open its seals.
For you were killed, and by your death
you bought men for God,
from every tribe, language, nation, and
race.
10 You have made them a kingdom of
priests to serve our God,
and they shall rule on earth."

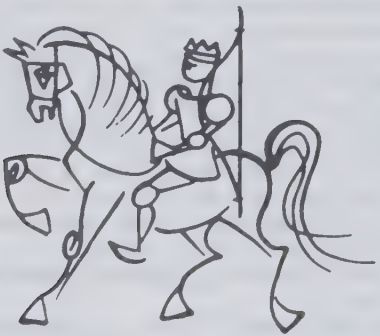
11Again I looked, and I heard angels, thousands and
millions of them! They stood around the throne, the
four living creatures, and the elders, 12and sang in a
loud voice,

"The Lamb who was killed is worthy
to receive power, wealth, wisdom, and
strength,
honor, glory, and praise!"

[13]And I heard every creature in heaven, on earth, and
in the world below, and every creature in the sea
—all creatures in the whole universe—and they were
singing,
"To him who sits on the throne, and to
the Lamb,
be praise and honor, glory and might,
forever and ever!"
[14]The four living creatures answered, "Amen!" And
the elders fell down and worshiped.

The Seals

6 Then I saw the Lamb break open the first of the
seven seals, and I heard one of the four living crea-
tures say in a voice that sounded like thunder, "Come!"
[2]I looked, and there was a white horse. Its rider held a
bow, and he was given a crown. He went out as a con-
queror to conquer.



He went out as a conqueror

[3]Then the Lamb broke open the second seal; and I
heard the second living creature say, "Come!" [4]Another
horse came out, a red one. Its rider was given the power
to bring war on the earth, that men should kill each
other; he was given a large sword.
[5]Then the Lamb broke open the third seal; and I heard
the third living creature say, "Come!" I looked, and
there was a black horse. Its rider held a pair of scales in
his hand. [6]I heard what sounded like a voice coming
from among the four living creatures. It said, "A quart

of wheat for a day's wages, and three quarts of barley for a day's wages. But do not damage the olive oil and the wine!"

[7]Then the Lamb broke open the fourth seal; and I heard the fourth living creature say, "Come!" [8]I looked, and there was a pale colored horse. Its rider was named Death, and Hades followed close behind. They were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with war, famine, and disease, and with the wild animals of earth.

[9]Then the Lamb broke open the fifth seal. I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been killed because they had proclaimed God's word and had been faithful in their witnessing. [10]They shouted in a loud voice, "Almighty Lord, holy and true! How long will it be until you judge the people of earth and punish them for killing us?" [11]Each of them was given a white robe; and they were told to rest a little while longer, until the total number was reached of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed, as they had been.

[12]And I saw the Lamb break open the sixth seal. There was a violent earthquake, and the sun became black, like coarse black cloth, and the moon turned completely red, like blood. [13]The stars fell out of the sky to earth, like unripe figs falling from the tree when a strong wind shakes it. [14]The sky disappeared, like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved from its place. [15]Then the kings of the earth, the rulers and the military chiefs, the rich and the mighty, and all other men, slave and free, hid themselves in caves and under rocks on the mountains. [16]They called out to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the eyes of the one who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb! [17]The great day of their wrath is here, and who can stand up against it?"

The 144,000 People of Israel

7 After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that no wind should blow on the earth, the sea, or any tree. [2]And I saw another angel coming up

from the east with the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels to whom God had given the power to damage the earth and the sea. [3]"The angel said, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees, until we mark the servants of our God with a seal on their foreheads." [4]And I was told the number of those who were marked with God's seal on their foreheads: it was 144,000, from every tribe of the people of Israel. [5]There were 12,000 from the tribe of Judah marked with the seal; 12,000 from the tribe of Reuben; 12,000 from the tribe of Gad; [6]12,000 from the tribe of Asher; 12,000 from the tribe of Naphtali; 12,000 from the tribe of Manasseh; [7]12,000 from the tribe of Simeon; 12,000 from the tribe of Levi; 12,000 from the tribe of Issachar; [8]12,000 from the tribe of Zebulun; 12,000 from the tribe of Joseph; and 12,000 from the tribe of Benjamin.

The Great Crowd

[9]After this I looked, and there was a great crowd — no one could count all the people! They were from every race, tribe, nation, and language, and they stood in front of the throne and of the Lamb, dressed in white robes, and holding palm branches in their hands. [10]They called out in a loud voice, "Our salvation comes from our God, who sits on the throne, and from the Lamb!" [11]All the angels stood around the throne, the elders, and the four living creatures. Then they fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, [12]saying, "Amen! Praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, power, and might belong to our God forever and ever! Amen!"

[13]One of the elders asked me, "Who are these people dressed in white robes, and where do they come from?"

[14]"I don't know, sir. You do," I answered.

He said to me, "These are the people who have come safely through the great persecution. They washed their robes and made them white with the blood of the Lamb. [15]That is why they stand before God's throne and serve him day and night in his temple. He who sits on the throne will protect them with his presence. [16]Never again will they hunger or thirst; neither sun nor any scorching heat will burn them; [17]because the Lamb, who is in the center of the throne, will be their shepherd, and

he will guide them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

The Seventh Seal

8 When the Lamb broke open the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. 2Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God; they were given seven trumpets.

I saw the seven angels

3Another angel, who had a gold incense container, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to add to the prayers of all God's people and offer on the gold altar that stands before the throne. 4The smoke of the burning incense went up with the prayers of God's people from the hands of the angel standing before God. 5Then the angel took the incense container, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it on the earth. There were peals of thunder, sounds, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

The Trumpets

6Then the seven angels with the seven trumpets prepared to blow them.

7The first angel blew his trumpet. Hail and fire, mixed with blood, came pouring down on the earth. A third of the earth was burned up, a third of the trees, and every blade of green grass.

8Then the second angel blew his trumpet. Something that looked like a large mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea was turned into blood, 9a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

10Then the third angel blew his trumpet. A large star,
burning like a torch, dropped from the sky and fell on
a third of the rivers, and on the springs of water. 11(The
name of the star is Bitterness.) A third of the water
turned bitter, and many men died from drinking the
water, because it had turned bitter.

12Then the fourth angel blew his trumpet. A third of
the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a
third of the stars, so that their light lost a third of its
brightness; there was no light during a third of the day
and during a third of the night also.

I heard an eagle

13Then I looked, and I heard an eagle that was flying
high in the air say in a loud voice, "O horror! horror!
How horrible it will be for all who live on earth when
the sound comes from the trumpets that the other
three angels must blow!"

9 Then the fifth angel blew his trumpet. I saw a star
which had fallen from the sky to earth; it was given
the key to the abyss. 2The star opened the abyss, and
smoke poured out of it, like the smoke from a large
furnace; the sunlight and the air were made dark by the
smoke from the abyss. 3Locusts came down out of the
smoke upon the earth, and they were given power like
that of scorpions. 4They were told not to harm the grass,
or the trees, or any other plant; they could harm only the
men who did not have the mark of God's seal on their
foreheads. 5The locusts were not allowed to kill these
men, but only to torture them for five months. The pain

caused by their torture is like the pain a man suffers when stung by a scorpion. 6During the five months those men will seek death, but will not find it; they will want to die, but death will flee from them.

7The locusts looked like horses ready for battle; on their heads they had what seemed to be gold crowns, and their faces were like men's faces. 8Their hair was like women's hair, their teeth were like lions' teeth. 9Their chests were covered with what looked like iron breastplates, and the sound made by their wings was like the noise of many horse-drawn chariots rushing into battle. 10They have tails and stings, like those of a scorpion, and it is with their tails that they have the power to hurt men for five months. 11They have a king ruling over them, who is the angel in charge of the abyss. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon; in Greek the name is Apollyon (meaning "The Destroyer").

12The first horror is over; after this there are still two more horrors to come.

13Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet. I heard a voice coming from the corners of the gold altar standing before God. 14The voice said to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates!" 15The four angels were released; they had been prepared for this very hour of this very day of this very month and year, to kill a third of all mankind. 16I was told the number of the mounted troops: it was 200 million. 17And in my vision I saw the horses and their riders: they had breastplates red as fire, blue as sapphire, and yellow as sulfur. The horses' heads were like lions' heads, and from their mouths came out fire, smoke, and sulfur. 18A third of mankind was killed by those three plagues: the fire, the smoke, and the sulfur coming out of the horses' mouths. 19For the power of the horses is in their mouths, and also in their tails. Their tails are like snakes, with heads, and they use them to hurt people.

20The rest of mankind, all those who had not been killed by these plagues, did not turn away from what they themselves had made. They did not stop worshiping the demons and the idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood, which cannot see, hear, or walk.

21 Nor did those men repent of their murders, their
magic, their immorality, or their stealing.

The Angel and the Little Scroll

10 Then I saw another mighty angel coming down
out of heaven. He was dressed in a cloud, with a
rainbow around his head; his face was like the sun, and
his legs were like columns of fire. 2 He had a small scroll
open in his hand. He put his right foot on the sea, his
left foot on the land, 3 and called out in a loud voice that
sounded like the roar of lions. After he had called out,
the seven thunders answered back with a roar. 4 As soon
as they spoke, I was about to write. But I heard a voice
speak from heaven, "Keep secret what the seven thun-
ders said; do not write it down!"

5 Then the angel that I saw standing on the sea and on
the land raised his right hand to heaven 6 and made a
vow in the name of God, who lives forever and ever,
who created heaven and all things in it, the earth and all
things in it, and the sea and all things in it. The angel
said, "There will be no more delay! 7 But when the sev-
enth angel blows his trumpet, then God will accomplish
his secret plan, as he announced to his servants, the
prophets."

8 Then the voice that I had heard speaking from
heaven spoke to me again, saying, "Go and take the
open scroll which is in the hand of the angel standing on
the sea and on the land."

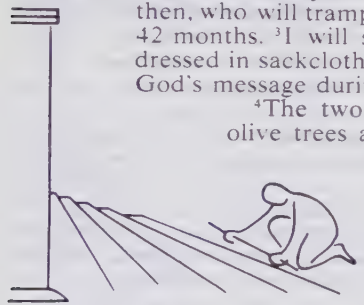
9 I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little
scroll. He said to me, "Take it and eat it; it will turn sour
in your stomach, but in your mouth it will be sweet as
honey."

10 I took the little scroll from his hand and ate it, and
it tasted sweet as honey in my mouth. But after I had
swallowed it, it turned sour in my stomach. 11 Then I was
told, "Once again you must speak God's message about
many nations, races, languages, and kings."

The Two Witnesses

11 I was then given a measuring stick, like a rod, and
told, "Get up and measure the temple of God and
the altar, and count those who are worshiping in the

temple. 2But omit the outer courts of the temple. Do not measure them, because they have been given to the heathen, who will trample on the Holy City for 42 months. 3I will send my two witnesses, dressed in sackcloth; and they will proclaim God's message during those 1,260 days."



Measure the temple

4The two witnesses are the two olive trees and the two lamps that stand before the Lord of the earth. 5If anyone tries to harm them, fire comes out of their mouths and destroys their enemies; and in this way whoever shall try to harm them will be killed. 6They have authority to shut up the sky so that there will be no rain during the time they proclaim God's message. They have authority also over the springs of water, to turn them into blood; they have authority also to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they wish.

7When they finish proclaiming their message, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will fight against them. He will defeat them and kill them, 8and their bodies will lie on the street of the great city, where their Lord was nailed to the cross. The symbolic name of that city is Sodom, or Egypt. 9People from all nations, tribes, languages, and races will look at their bodies for three and a half days, and will not allow them to be buried. 10The people of earth will be happy over the death of these two. They will celebrate, and send presents to one another, because those two prophets brought much suffering upon the people of earth. 11After three and a half days a life-giving breath came from God and entered them, and they stood up; all who saw them were terribly afraid. 12Then the two prophets heard a loud voice say to them from heaven, "Come up here!" As their enemies watched, they went up into heaven in a cloud. 13At that very moment there was a violent earthquake; a tenth of the city was destroyed, and 7,000 people were killed in the earth-

quake. The rest of the people were terrified and praised the greatness of the God of heaven.

[14]The second horror is over; but look! The third horror will come soon.

The Seventh Trumpet

[15]Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The power to rule over the world belongs now to our Lord and his Messiah, and he will rule forever and ever!" [16]Then the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell down on their faces and worshiped God, [17]saying:

"Lord God Almighty, who is and who was!
We thank you that you have used your great power
and have begun to rule!
[18] The heathen were filled with rage,
because it is the time for your wrath to come,
and for the dead to be judged.
It is the time to reward your servants, the prophets,
and all your people, all who fear you, great and small alike.
It is the time to destroy those who destroy the earth!"

[19]God's temple in heaven was opened, and the box holding the covenant was seen in his temple. Then there were flashes of lightning, sounds, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.

The Woman and the Dragon

12 Then a great mysterious sight appeared in the sky. There was a woman, whose dress was the sun and who had the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. [2]She was soon to give birth, and the pains and suffering of childbirth made her cry out.

[3]Another mysterious sight appeared in the sky. There was a huge red dragon with seven heads and ten horns,

and a crown on each of his heads. [4]With his tail he dragged a third of the stars out of the sky and threw them to earth. He stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, in order to eat her child as soon as it was born. [5]Then the woman gave birth to a son, who will rule over all nations with an iron rod. But the child was snatched away and taken to God and his throne. [6]The woman fled to the desert, to a place God had prepared for her, where she will be taken care of for 1,260 days.

[7]Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, who fought back with his angels; [8]but the dragon was defeated, and he and his angels were not allowed to stay in heaven any longer. [9]The huge dragon was thrown out! He is that old serpent, named the Devil, or Satan, that deceived the whole world. He was thrown down to earth, and all his angels with him.

The dragon was defeated

[10]Then I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, "Now God's salvation has come! Now God has shown his power as King! Now his Messiah has shown his authority! For the accuser of our brothers, who stood before God accusing them day and night, has been thrown out of heaven. [11]Our brothers won the victory over him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the truth

which they proclaimed; and they were willing to give up their lives and die. [12]And so be glad, you heavens, and all you that live there! But how terrible for the earth and the sea! For the Devil has come down to you, and he is filled with rage, because he knows that he has only a little time left."

[13]When the dragon realized that he had been thrown down to the earth, he began to pursue the woman who had given birth to the boy. [14]She was given the two wings of a large eagle in order to fly to her place in the desert, where she will be taken care of for three and a half years, safe from the serpent's attack. [15]And then from his mouth the serpent poured out a flood of water after the woman, so that it would carry her away. [16]But the earth helped the woman; it opened its mouth and swallowed the water that had come from the dragon's mouth. [17]The dragon was furious with the woman, and went off to fight against the rest of her descendants, all those who obey God's commandments and are faithful to the truth revealed by Jesus. [18]And the dragon stood on the seashore.

The Two Beasts

13 Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads, with a crown on each of its horns, and a wicked name written on its heads. [2]The beast I saw looked like a leopard, with feet like a bear's feet, and a mouth like a lion's mouth. The dragon gave the beast his own power, his throne, and his vast authority. [3]One of the heads of the beast seemed to have been killed, but the fatal wound had healed. The whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast. [4]All people worshiped the dragon because he had given his authority to the beast. They worshiped the beast also, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who can fight against it?"

[5]The beast was allowed to say terribly wicked things, and it was permitted to have authority for 42 months. [6]It began to curse God, his name, the place where he lives, and all those who live in heaven. [7]It was allowed to fight against God's people and to defeat them, and it was given authority over every tribe, nation, language,

and race. [8]All people living on earth will worship it, that is, everyone whose name has not been written, before the world was created, in the book of the living that belongs to the Lamb that was killed.

[9]"Listen, then, if you have ears to hear with! [10]Whoever is meant to be captured, will surely be captured; whoever is meant to be killed by the sword, will surely be killed by the sword. This calls for endurance and faith on the part of God's people."

[11]Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb's horns, and it spoke like a dragon. [12]It used the vast authority of the first beast in its presence. It forced the earth and all who live on it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. [13]This second beast performed great miracles; it made fire come down out of heaven to earth, in the presence of all men. [14]And it deceived all the people living on earth by means of the miracles which it was allowed to perform in the presence of the first beast. The beast told all the people of the world to build an image in honor of the beast that had been wounded by the sword, and yet lived. [15]The second beast was allowed to breathe life into the image of the first beast, so that the image could talk and put to death all those who would not worship it. [16]The beast forced all men, small and great, rich and poor, slave and free, to have a mark placed on their right hands and on their foreheads. [17]No one could buy or sell unless he had this mark, that is, the beast's name or the number that stands for the name.

[18]This calls for wisdom. Whoever is intelligent can figure out the meaning of the number of the beast, because the number stands for a man's name. Its number is 666.

The Song of the Redeemed

14 Then I looked, and there was the Lamb standing on Mount Zion; with him were 144,000 people who have his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. [2]And I heard a voice from heaven that sounded like the roar of a mighty waterfall, like a loud peal of thunder. The voice I heard sounded like the

music made by harpists playing their harps. [3]The 144,000 stood facing the throne, the four living creatures, and the elders. They sang a new song which only they, who had been redeemed from the earth, could learn. [4]They are the men who have kept themselves pure by not having sexual relations with women; they are virgins. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They have been redeemed from the rest of mankind and are the first ones to be offered to God and to the Lamb. [5]They have never been known to lie; they are faultless.

The Three Angels

[6]Then I saw another angel flying high in the air, with an eternal message of Good News to announce to the peoples of the earth, to every race, tribe, language, and nation. [7]He said in a loud voice, "Fear God, and praise his greatness! For the time has come for him to judge mankind. Worship him who made heaven, earth, sea, and the springs of water!"

[8]A second angel followed the first one, saying, "She has fallen! Great Babylon has fallen! She gave her wine to all peoples, and made them drink it—the strong wine of her immoral lust!"

[9]A third angel followed the first two, saying in a loud voice, "Whoever worships the beast and its image, and receives the mark on his forehead or on his hand, [10]will himself drink God's wine, the wine of his anger, which he has poured at full strength into the cup of his wrath! All who do this will be tormented in fire and sulfur before the holy angels and the Lamb. [11]The smoke of the fire that torments them goes up forever and ever. There is no relief, day or night, for those who worship the beast and its image, for anyone who has the mark of its name."

[12]This calls for endurance on the part of God's people, those who obey God's commandments and are faithful to Jesus.

[13]Then I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Happy are the dead who from now on die in the service of the Lord!"

"Certainly so," answers the Spirit. "They will enjoy rest from their hard work, because the results of their service go with them."

The Harvest of the Earth

14 Then I looked, and there was a white cloud, and
sitting on the cloud was a being who looked like a man,
with a gold crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his
hand. 15 Then another angel went out from the temple
and cried out in a loud voice to the one who was sitting
on the cloud, "Use your sickle and reap the harvest,
because the right time has come; the earth is ripe for the
harvest!" 16 Then the one who sat on the cloud swung his
sickle on the earth, and the earth's harvest was reaped.

Reap the harvest

17 Then I saw another angel come out of the temple in
heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle.
18 Then another angel, who is in charge of the fire,
came from the altar. He shouted in a loud voice to the
angel who had the sharp sickle, "Use your sickle, and cut
the grapes from the vineyard of the earth, because the
grapes are ripe!" 19 So the angel swung his sickle on the
earth, cut the grapes from the vine, and threw them into
the winepress of God's great anger. 20 The grapes were
squeezed out in the winepress outside the city, and blood
came out of the winepress in a flood 200 miles long and
about five feet deep.

The Angels with the Last Plagues

15 Then I saw another mysterious sight in the sky,
great and amazing. There were seven angels with

seven plagues, which are the last ones, because they are the final expression of God's wrath.

2 Then I saw what looked like a sea of glass, mixed with fire. I also saw those who had won the victory over the beast and its image, and over the one whose name is given by a number. They were standing by the sea of glass, holding harps that God had given them. 3 They were singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb:

"Lord, God Almighty,
how great and wonderful are your deeds!
King of all nations,
how right and true are your ways!
4 Who will not fear you, Lord?
Who will refuse to declare your greatness?
You alone are holy.
All the nations will come
and worship before you,
because your righteous deeds are seen by all."

5 After this I saw the temple in heaven open, with the tent of God's presence in it. 6 The seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple; they were dressed in clean shining linen, and had gold bands tied around their chests. 7 Then one of the four living creatures gave the seven angels seven gold bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever. 8 The temple was filled with smoke from the glory and power of God, and no one could go into the temple until the end of the seven plagues brought by the seven angels.

The Bowls of God's Wrath

16 Then I heard a loud voice speaking from the temple to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth!"

2 The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth. Terrible and painful sores appeared on those who had the mark of the beast, and on those who had worshiped its image.

[3]Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea. The water became like the blood of a dead person, and every living creature in the sea died.

[4]Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and the springs of water, and they turned into blood. [5]I heard the angel in charge of the waters say, "You are righteous in these judgments you have made, O Holy One, who is and who was! [6]They poured out the blood of God's people and of the prophets, and so you have given them blood to drink. They are getting what they deserve!" [7]Then I heard a voice from the altar saying, "Lord, God Almighty! True and righteous indeed are your judgments!"

[8]Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to burn men with its fiery heat. [9]Men were burned by the fierce heat, and they cursed the name of God, who has authority over these plagues. But they would not turn from their sins and praise his greatness.

[10]Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast. Darkness fell over the beast's kingdom, and men bit their tongues because of their pain, [11]and they cursed the God of heaven for their pains and sores. But they did not turn from their evil ways.

[12]Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates. The river dried up, to provide a way for the kings who come from the east. [13]Then I saw three unclean spirits, that looked like frogs, coming out of the mouth of the dragon, the mouth of the beast, and the mouth of the false prophet. [14]They are the spirits of demons that perform miracles. These three spirits go out to the kings over the whole earth, to bring them together for the war on the great day of Almighty God.

[15]"Listen! I am coming like a thief! Happy is he who stays awake and takes care of his clothing, so that he will not walk around naked and be ashamed in public!"

[16]Then the spirits brought the kings together in the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.

[17]Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl in the air. A loud voice came from the throne in the temple,

saying, "It is done!" [18]There were flashes of lightning, sounds, peals of thunder, and a terrible earthquake. There never has been such an earthquake since the creation of man; this was the worst earthquake of all! [19]The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of all countries were destroyed. God remembered great Babylon, and made her drink the wine from his cup—the wine of his furious wrath. [20]All the islands disappeared, all the mountains vanished. [21]Great stones of hail, each weighing as much as a hundred pounds, fell from the sky on men. And men cursed God because of the plague of hail, because it was such a terrible plague.

The Great Prostitute

17 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came to me and said, "Come, and I will show you how the great prostitute is to be punished, that great city that is built near many rivers. [2]The kings of the earth committed immorality with the great prostitute, and the people of the world became drunk from drinking the wine of her immorality."

[3]The Spirit took control of me, and the angel carried me to a desert. There I saw a woman sitting on a red beast that had wicked names written all over it; the beast had seven heads and ten horns. [4]The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and covered with gold ornaments, precious stones, and pearls. In her hand she held a gold cup full of obscene and filthy things, the result of her immorality. [5]On her forehead was written a name that has a secret meaning: "The Great Babylon, mother of all prostitutes and perverts of the world." [6]And I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God's people, and the blood of those who were killed because they had been loyal to Jesus.

When I saw her I was completely amazed. [7]"Why are you amazed?" the angel asked me. "I will tell you the secret meaning of the woman and of the beast that carries her, the beast with seven heads and ten horns. [8]The beast you saw was once alive, but lives no longer; it is about to come up from the abyss and will go off to be destroyed. The people living on earth whose names have not been written, before the world was created, in the

book of the living, will all be amazed as they look at the beast. It was once alive; now it no longer lives, but it will reappear.

"This calls for wisdom and understanding. The seven heads are seven hills, the hills that the woman sits on. They are also seven kings: [10]five of them have fallen, one still rules, and the other one has not yet come; when he comes he must remain only a little while. [11]And the beast that was once alive, but lives no longer, is itself an eighth king who belongs to the first seven and goes off to be destroyed.

[12]"The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet begun to rule, but who will be given authority to rule as kings for one hour with the beast. [13]These ten all have the same purpose, and they give their power and authority to the beast. [14]They will fight against the Lamb; but the Lamb, and his called, chosen, and faithful followers with him, will defeat them, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings."

[15]The angel also said to me, "The waters you saw, on which the prostitute sits, are nations, peoples, races, and languages. [16]The ten horns you saw, and the beast, will hate the prostitute; they will take away everything she has and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and destroy her with fire. [17]For God placed in their hearts the desire to carry out his purpose, by acting with one accord and giving to the beast their power to rule, until God's words come true.

[18]"The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth."

The Fall of Babylon

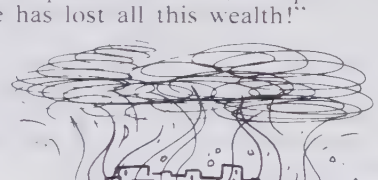
18 After this I saw another angel coming down out of heaven. He had great authority, and his splendor brightened the whole earth. [2]He cried out in a loud voice, "She has fallen! Great Babylon has fallen! She is now haunted by demons and unclean spirits; all kinds of filthy and hateful birds live in her. [3]For she gave her wine to all peoples and made them drink it—the strong wine of her immoral lust. The kings of the earth committed immorality with her, and the businessmen of the world grew rich from her unrestrained lust."

4Then I heard another voice from heaven, saying,
"Come out, my people! Come out from
her!
You must not take part in her sins;
you must not share her punishments!
5For her sins are piled up as high as heaven,
and God remembers her wicked ways.
6Treat her exactly as she has treated you;
pay her back twice as much as she has
done.
Fill her cup with a drink twice as strong
as the drink she prepared for you.
7Give her as much suffering and grief
as the glory and luxury she gave herself.
For she keeps telling herself:
'Here I sit, a queen!
I am no widow,
I will never know grief!'
8Because of this her plagues will all strike
her in one day,
disease, grief, and famine.
And she will be burned with fire,
because the Lord God, who judges her,
is mighty."

9The kings of the earth who shared her immorality and lust will cry and weep over the city when they see the smoke of her burning. 10They stand a long way off, because they are afraid of her suffering, and say, "How terrible! How awful! This great and mighty city Babylon! In just one hour you have been punished!"

11The businessmen of the earth also cry and mourn for her, because no one buys their goods any longer: 12no one buys their gold, silver, precious stones, and pearls; their goods of linen, purple cloth, silk, and scarlet; all kinds of rare woods, and all kinds of objects made of ivory and of expensive wood, of bronze, iron, and marble; 13and cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, and frankincense; wine and oil, flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and carriages, slaves and even men's souls. 14The businessmen say to her, "All the good things you longed to own have disappeared, and all your wealth and glamor are gone, and you will never find them again!" 15The businessmen, who became rich from doing business in that city, will stand

a long way off, because they are afraid of her suffering.
They will cry and mourn, [16]and say, "How terrible!
How awful for the great city! She used to dress herself
in linen, purple, and scarlet, and cover herself with
gold ornaments, precious stones, and pearls! [17]And in
one hour she has lost all this wealth!"



The smoke of her burning

All the ship captains and passengers, the sailors and
all others who earn their living on the sea, stood a long
way off, [18]and cried out as they saw the smoke of her
burning, "There never has been another city like the
great city!" [19]They threw dust on their heads, they
cried and mourned, saying, "How terrible! How awful
for the great city! She is the city where all who have
ships sailing the seas became rich on her wealth! And
in one hour she has lost everything!"

[20]Be glad, heaven, because of her destruction! Be
glad, God's people, and the apostles and prophets! Be-
cause God has judged her for what she did to you!

[21]Then a mighty angel picked up a stone the size of
a large millstone and threw it into the sea, saying,
"This is how the great city Babylon will be thrown
down with violence, and will never be seen again.
[22]The music of harpists and musicians, of players of
the flute and the trumpet, will never be heard in you
again! No workman in any trade will ever be found in
you again; and the sound of the millstone will be heard
no more! [23]Never again will the light of a lamp be seen
in you; no more will the voices of bride and groom be
heard in you. Your businessmen were the most power-
ful in all the world, and with your false magic you
deceived all the peoples of the world!"

[24]Babylon was punished because the blood of proph-
ets and of God's people was found in the city; yes, the
blood of all those who have been killed on earth.

19 After this I heard what sounded like the loud voice of a great crowd of people in heaven, saying, "Praise God! Salvation, glory, and power belong to our God! 2 True and righteous are his judgments! He has condemned the great prostitute who was corrupting the earth with her immorality. God has punished her because she killed his servants." 3 Again they shouted, "Praise God! The smoke from the burning of the great city goes up forever and ever!" 4 The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne, and said, "Amen! Praise God!"

The Wedding Feast of the Lamb

5 Then there came from the throne the sound of a voice, saying, "Praise our God, all his servants, and all men, both great and small, who fear him!" 6 Then I heard what sounded like the voice of a great crowd, like the roar of a mighty waterfall, like loud peals of thunder. I heard them say, "Praise God! For the Lord, our Almighty God, is King! 7 Let us rejoice and be glad; let us praise his greatness! For the time has come for the wedding of the Lamb, and his bride has prepared herself for it. 8 She has been given clean shining linen to dress herself with." (The linen is the righteous deeds of God's people.)

9 Then the angel said to me, "Write this: Happy are those who have been invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb." And the angel added, "These are the true words of God."

10 I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "Don't do it! I am a fellow servant of yours, and of your brothers, all those who hold to the truth that Jesus revealed. Worship God!"

For the truth that Jesus revealed is what inspires the prophets.

The Rider on the White Horse

11 Then I saw heaven open, and there was a white horse. Its rider is called Faithful and True; it is with justice that he judges and fights his battles. 12 His eyes were like a flame of fire, and he wore many crowns on his head. He had a name written on him, but no one

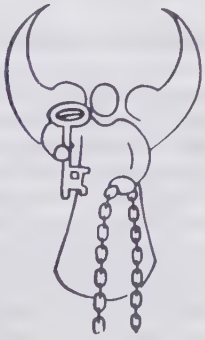
except himself knows what it is. 13The robe he wore was
covered with blood. The name by which he is called is
"The Word of God." 14The armies of heaven followed
him, riding on white horses and dressed in clean white
linen. 15A sharp sword came out of his mouth, with
which he will defeat the nations. He will rule over them
with a rod of iron, and he will squeeze out the wine in
the winepress of the furious wrath of the Almighty God.
16On his robe and on his leg was written the name:
"King of kings and Lord of lords."

17Then I saw an angel standing in the sun. He shouted
in a loud voice to all the birds flying in mid-air, "Come,
and gather together for God's great feast! 18Come and
eat the flesh of kings, generals, and soldiers, the flesh of
horses and their riders, the flesh of all men, slave and
free, great and small!"

19Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and
their armies gathered to fight against the one who rides
the horse, and against his army. 20The beast was taken
prisoner, together with the false prophet who had per-
formed miracles in his presence. (It was by those mira-
cles that he had deceived those who had the mark of the
beast, and those who had worshiped the image of the
beast.) The beast and the false prophet were both
thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur.
21Their armies were killed by the sword that comes out
of the mouth of the one who rides the horse; and all the
birds ate all they could of their flesh.

The Thousand Years

20 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven,
holding in his hand the key of
the abyss and a heavy chain.
2He seized the dragon, that old
serpent—that is, the Devil, or
Satan—and tied him up for a
thousand years. 3The angel
threw him into the abyss, locked
it and sealed it, so that he could
not deceive the nations any
more until the thousand years
were over. After that he must be
set loose for a little while.



The key of the abyss

4Then I saw thrones, and those who sat on them; they
were given the power to judge. I also saw the souls of
those who had been executed because they had pro-
claimed the truth that Jesus revealed and the word of
God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image, nor
had they received the mark of the beast on their fore-
heads or hands. They came to life and ruled as kings
with Christ for a thousand years. 5(The rest of the dead
did not come to life until the thousand years were over.)
This is the first raising of the dead. 6Happy and greatly
blessed are those who are included in this first raising of
the dead. The second death has no power over them;
they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they will
rule with him for a thousand years.

The Defeat of Satan

7After the thousand years are over, Satan will be set
loose from his prison, 8and he will go out to deceive the
nations scattered over all the world, that is, Gog and
Magog. Satan will bring them all together for battle, as
many as the grains of sand on the seashore. 9They
spread out over the earth and surrounded the camp of
God's people and the city that he loves. But fire came
down from heaven and destroyed them. 10Then the
Devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of
fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet
had already been thrown; and they will be tormented
day and night, forever and ever.

The Final Judgment

11Then I saw a large white throne and the one who sits
on it. Earth and heaven fled from his presence, and were
seen no more. 12And I saw the dead, great and small
alike, standing before the throne. Books were opened,
and then another book was opened, the book of the
living. The dead were judged according to what they
had done, as was written in the books. 13Then the sea
gave up its dead. Death and the world of the dead also
gave up the dead they held. And all were judged accord-
ing to what they had done. 14Then death and the world
of the dead were thrown into the lake of fire. (This lake
of fire is the second death.) 15Whoever did not have his

name written in the book of the living was thrown into the lake of fire.

The New Heaven and the New Earth

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth disappeared, and the sea vanished. [2]And I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared and ready, like a bride dressed to meet her husband. [3]I heard a loud voice speaking from the throne, "Now God's home is with men! He will live with them, and they shall be his people. God himself will be with them, and he will be their God. [4]He will wipe away all tears from their eyes. There will be no more death, no more grief, crying, or pain. The old things have disappeared."

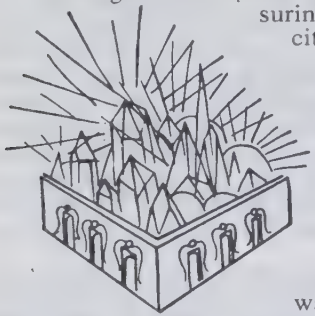
[5]Then the one who sits on the throne said, "And now I make all things new!" He also said to me, "Write this, because these words are true and can be trusted." [6]And he said, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To anyone who is thirsty I will give a free drink of water from the spring of the water of life. [7]Whoever wins the victory will receive this from me: I will be his God, and he will be my son. [8]But the cowards, the traitors, and the perverts, the murderers and the immoral, those who practice magic and those who worship idols, and all liars—the place for them is the lake burning with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."

The New Jerusalem

[9]One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came to me and said, "Come, and I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb." [10]The Spirit took control of me, and the angel carried me to the top of a very high mountain. He showed me Jerusalem, the Holy City, coming down out of heaven from God, [11]shining with the glory of God. The city shone like a precious stone, like a jasper, clear as crystal. [12]It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and with twelve angels in charge of the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of the people of

Israel. [13]There were three gates on each side: three on the east, three on the south, three on the north, and three on the west. [14]The city's wall was built on twelve stones, on which were written the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

[15]The angel who spoke to me had a gold measuring stick, to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. [16]The city was perfectly square, as long as it was wide. The angel measured the city with his measuring stick: it was 1,500 miles long, and was as wide and as high as it was long. [17]The angel also measured the wall, and it was 216 feet high, according to the standard unit of measure, which he was using. [18]The wall was made of jasper, and the city itself was made of pure gold, as clear as glass. [19]The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with all kinds of precious stones. The first foundation stone was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, [20]the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh yellow quartz, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chalcedony, the eleventh turquoise, the twelfth amethyst. [21]The twelve gates were twelve pearls; each gate was made from a single pearl. The street of the city was of pure gold, transparent as glass.



Gold, as clear as glass

[22]I did not see a temple in the city, because its temple is the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb. [23]The city has no need of the sun or the moon to shine on it, because the glory of God shines on it, and the Lamb is its lamp. [24]The peoples of the world will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their wealth into it. [25]The gates of the city will stand open all day; they will never be closed, because there will be no night there. [26]The greatness and the wealth of the nations will be brought into the city. [27]But nothing that is impure will enter the city, nor anyone who does

shameful things or tells lies. Only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of the living will enter the city.

22 The angel also showed me the river of the water of life, sparkling like crystal, which comes from the throne of God and of the Lamb, [2]and flows down the middle of the city's street. On each side of the river was the tree of life, which bears fruit twelve times a year, once every month; and its leaves are for the healing of the nations. [3]Nothing that is under God's curse will be found in the city.

The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will worship him. [4]They will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. [5]There shall be no more night, and they will not need lamps or sunlight, because the Lord God will be their light, and they will rule as kings forever and ever.

The Coming of Jesus

[6]Then the angel said to me, "These words are true and can be trusted. And the Lord God, who gives his Spirit to the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants what must happen very soon."

[7]"Listen!" says Jesus. "I am coming soon! Happy are those who obey the prophetic words in this book!"

[8]I, John, have heard and seen all these things. And when I finished hearing and seeing them, I fell down at the feet of the angel who had shown me these things to worship him. [9]But he said to me, "Don't do it! I am a fellow servant of yours, and of your brothers the prophets, and of all those who obey the words in this book. Worship God!" [10]And he said to me, "Do not keep the prophetic words of this book a secret, because the time is near when all this will happen. [11]Whoever is evil must go on doing evil, and whoever is filthy must go on being filthy; whoever is good must go on doing good, and whoever is holy must go on being holy."

[12]"Listen!" says Jesus. "I am coming soon! I will bring my rewards with me to give to each one according to what he has done. [13]I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

[14]Happy are those who wash their robes clean, and
so have the right to eat the fruit from the tree of life,
and to go through the gates into the city. [15]But outside
the city are the perverts and those who practice magic,
the immoral and the murderers, those who worship
idols, and those who are liars, both in words and
deeds.

[16]"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to announce these
things to you in the churches. I am the descendant
from the family of David; I am the bright morning
star."

[17]The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!"

Everyone who hears this must also say, "Come!"

Come, whoever is thirsty; accept the water of life as
a gift, whoever wants it.

Conclusion

[18]I, John, solemnly warn everyone who hears the pro-
phetic words of this book: if anyone adds anything to
them, God will add to his punishment the plagues de-
scribed in this book. [19]And if anyone takes away any-
thing from the prophetic words of this book, God will
take away from him his share of the fruit of the tree of
life, and his share of the Holy City, which are described
in this book.

[20]He who gives his testimony to all this, says, "Cer-
tainly so! I am coming soon!"

So be it. Come, Lord Jesus!

[21]May the grace of the Lord Jesus be with all.

THE PSALMS for Modern Man

Today's English Version

PREFACE

The book of Psalms is the hymnbook and prayer book of the Bible. Composed by different authors over a long period of time, these hymns and prayers were collected and used by the people of Israel in their worship, and eventually this collection was included in their Holy Scriptures.

These religious poems are of many kinds: there are hymns of praise and worship of God; prayers for help, protection, and salvation; pleas for forgiveness; songs of thanksgiving for God's blessings; and petitions for the punishment of enemies. These prayers are personal and national; some portray the most intimate feelings of one person, while others represent the needs and feelings of all the people of God.

Many of the Psalms are quoted in the New Testament, and such passages as Mary's song of praise (Luke 1.46-55), Zechariah's prophecy (Luke 1.68-79), and Simeon's prayer of thanksgiving (Luke 2.29-32) reflect the language and style of the psalms. They were used by Jesus, quoted by the writers of the New Testament, and became the treasured book of worship of the Christian Church from its very beginning.

This translation of the Psalms attempts to represent the meaning of the Hebrew text as faithfully as possible, and at the same time convey something of the grace and beauty of the original poetry. The basic poetic structure of the Psalms consists of a statement

which is repeated, in a modified fashion, in the next line. Sometimes this parallelism is continued over several lines. The possible variations are almost unlimited, and the reader who is aware of them will discover new beauty in the Psalms. In addition, unusual words and figurative expressions help create and sustain a poetic atmosphere.

Ancient Hebrew poetry did not have rhyme, and the meter was quite different from what is commonly used in English. This translation has been made in free verse, and the translators have tried to put the Psalms in easy-flowing, rhythmical lines that can be effective in public worship as well as in private devotion.

Like the New Testament in Today's English Version, this is a distinctly new translation that does not conform to traditional vocabulary or style, but seeks to express the meaning of the Hebrew text in words and forms accepted as standard by people everywhere who employ English as a means of communication. Where there is general agreement that the Hebrew text presents unresolved difficulties in interpretation, this translation employs the evidence of other ancient texts or follows present-day scholarly consensus. All such modifications are identified in footnotes.

This text was prepared by a committee working on a translation of the entire Old Testament. It was submitted to Bible scholars and stylists for study and comment, and was finally reviewed and approved by the Translations Committee of the American Bible Society. The line drawings were especially prepared to accompany the text.

THE PSALMS

Book One
(Psalms 1—41)

True Happiness

1 Happy is the man
who refuses the advice of evil men,
who does not follow the example of sinners,
or join those who make fun of God.
2 Instead, he enjoys reading the law of the Lord,
and studying it day and night.
3 He is like a tree that grows beside a stream;
it gives fruit at the right time,
and its leaves do not dry up.
He succeeds in everything he does.

4 But evil men are not like this at all;
they are like straw that the wind blows away.
5 Evil men will be condemned by God;
sinners will be kept apart from the righteous.
6 The Lord cares for the righteous man,
but the evil man will be lost forever.

God's Chosen King

2 Why do the nations plan rebellion?
Why do these people make useless plots?
2 Their kings revolt,
their rulers plot together
against the Lord and his chosen king.

3 "Let us free ourselves from their rule,"
they say;
"let us throw off their control."

4 From his throne in heaven the Lord
laughs
and makes fun of them.
5 He speaks to them in anger,
and terrifies them with his fury.
6 "On Zion, my sacred hill," he says,
"I have installed my king."

7 "I will announce what the Lord declared,"
says the king.
"The Lord said to me: 'You are my son;
today I have become your father.
8 Ask, and I will give you all the nations;
the whole earth will be yours.
9 You will rule over them with an iron hand;
you will break them in pieces like a clay
pot.' "

10 Now listen to me, you kings;
pay attention, you rulers!
11 Serve the Lord with fear;
tremble 12 and bow down to him;[a]
or else he will be angry, and you will die,
for his anger is quickly aroused.
Happy are all who go to him for protection!

Morning Prayer for Help[b]

3 I have so many enemies, Lord,
so many who turn against me!
2 They talk about me and say,
"God will not help him!"

3 But you, Lord, always shield me from
danger;

[a]*Hebrew unclear.* [b]*Hebrew title:* David wrote this psalm after he ran away from his son Absalom.

you give me victory
and restore my courage.
[4] I call to the Lord for help,
and from his sacred hill he answers me.

Always shield me from danger

[5] I lie down and sleep,
and I wake up safe, because the Lord
protects me.
[6] I am not afraid of the thousands of
enemies
who surround me on every side.

[7] Come, Lord! Save me, my God!
You defeat all my enemies,
you destroy all the wicked.
[8] Salvation comes from the Lord—
may he bless his people!

Evening Prayer for Help

4 Answer me when I call,
God, my defender!
When I was in trouble, you came to my
help.
Be kind to me now and hear my prayer!

2 How long will you men insult me?
How long will you love what is worthless,
and go after what is false?

3 Remember that the Lord has chosen me
to be his own,
and hears me when I call to him.

4 Be afraid and stop your sinning;
think deeply about this,
alone and silent in your rooms.
5 Offer the right sacrifices to the Lord,
and put your trust in him.

6 There are many who say,
"How we wish to receive a blessing!"
Look on us with kindness, Lord!
7 The joy that you give me is much greater
than the joy of those who have plenty of grain and wine.

8 As soon as I lie down, I go quietly to sleep;
you alone, Lord, keep me perfectly safe.

A Prayer for Protection

5 Listen to my words, Lord,
and hear my sighs.
2 My king and my God,
listen to my cry for help.

I will pray to you, Lord;
3 in the morning you hear my voice;
at sunrise I offer up my prayer,
and wait for your answer.

4 You are not a God who is pleased with wrongdoing;
you allow no evil in your presence.

5 You cannot stand the sight of proud men;
you hate all wicked men.
6 You destroy all liars,
and despise violent and deceitful men.

7 As for me, I can come into your house,
because of your great love;
I can worship in your holy temple,
and bow down to you in reverence.
8 Lord, I have many enemies;
lead me to do your will,
and make your way plain for me to follow!

9 What my enemies say can never be trusted:
they only want to destroy;
their mouth is like an open grave,
and their words are smooth and deceptive.
10 Condemn and punish them, God;
cause their evil plans to fail.
Throw them out of your presence
because of their many sins
and their rebellion against you.

11 All who find safety in you will rejoice;
they will always sing for joy.
You protect those who love you;
because of you they are truly happy.
12 You bless those who obey you, Lord;
your kindness protects them like a shield.

A Prayer for Help in Time of Trouble

6 Lord, don't be angry and rebuke me!
Don't punish me in your anger!
2 Have pity on me, because I am worn out;
restore me, because I am completely exhausted;

3 my whole being is deeply troubled.
How long, Lord, will this last?

4 Come and save me, Lord;
because you love me, rescue me from death.
5 In the world of the dead you are not remembered;
no one can praise you there!

6 I am worn out with grief;
every night my bed is damp from my crying,
my pillow is soaked with tears.
7 My eyes are swollen from so much weeping,
and I can hardly see—
all because of my enemies!

8 Go away, you evildoers!
The Lord hears my weeping;
9 he listens to my cries for help,
and answers my prayers.
10 My enemies will all know the bitter shame of defeat;
in utter confusion they will suddenly be driven away.

A Prayer for Justice[c]

7 Lord, my God, I have found safety with you;
save me, and rescue me from all who pursue me,
2 or else like a lion they will carry me off
where no one can save me;
and there they will tear me to pieces.

3 Lord, my God, if I have done any of these:

[c] *Hebrew title:* A song which David sang to the Lord because of Cush the Benjaminite.

if I have wronged someone,
4 if I have betrayed my friend,
or without cause done violence to my enemy,
5 then may my enemies pursue me and catch me,
may they cut me down and kill me,
and leave me lifeless on the ground!

6 Rise in your anger, Lord,
and stand up against the fury of my enemies!
Wake up and help me,
because justice is what you demand.
7 Bring together all the peoples around you,
and rule over them from above.[d]
8 You, Lord, are the judge of all men.
Judge in my favor,
because I am innocent and good.

9 Stop the wickedness of evil men,
and reward, I pray, the good men.
You are a righteous God,
and judge men's thoughts and desires.
10 God is my protector;
he saves those who obey him.
11 God is a righteous judge
and always condemns the wicked.

12 If men do not repent,
God will sharpen his sword.
He bends his bow and makes it ready;
13 he takes up his deadly weapons
and aims his burning arrows.

14 See how the wicked man thinks up evil;
he plans trouble and practices deception.
15 He digs a deep hole in the ground,
then falls into his own pit!

[d]rule over them from above; *Hebrew* return above over them.

16 So he is punished by his own evil;
he is hurt by his own violence.

17 I will thank the Lord for his justice,
I will sing praises to the Lord, the Most High.

God's Glory and Man's Dignity

8 Lord, our Lord,
your greatness is seen in all the world!
Your praise reaches up to the heavens;
2 it is sung by children and babies.
You have built a fortress against your foes
to stop your enemies and adversaries.

3 When I look at the sky, which you have made,
at the moon and the stars, which you set in their places—
4 what is man, that you think of him;
mere man, that you care for him?

5 Yet you made him inferior only to yourself;
you crowned him with glory and honor.
6 You made him ruler over all you have made;
you placed him over all things:
7 sheep and cattle, and wild animals too;
8 the birds and the fish,
and all the creatures in the seas.

9 Lord, our Lord,
your greatness is seen in all the world!

Thanksgiving to God for His Justice

9 I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart,
I will tell all the wonderful things you have done.

Your greatness is seen in all the world!

[2] I will sing with joy because of you.
I will sing praise to you, Most High!

[3] My enemies turn back when you appear;
they fall down and die.
[4] As a righteous judge you sit on your throne,
and you have judged in my favor.

[5] You have condemned the heathen and destroyed the wicked,
and they will be remembered no more.
[6] Our enemies are finished forever;
you have destroyed their cities,
and they are completely forgotten.

[7] But the Lord is king forever;
he has set up his throne for judgment.
[8] He rules the world with righteousness;
he judges the people with justice.

[9] The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed,
a place of safety in times of trouble.
[10] Those who know you, Lord, will trust you;

you do not abandon anyone who comes
to you.

[11] Sing praise to the Lord, who rules in Zion!
Tell every nation what he has done!
[12] God remembers those who suffer;
he does not forget their cry,
and he punishes those who wrong them.

[13] Be merciful to me, Lord!
See how mistreated I am by those who
hate me!
Rescue me from death, Lord,
[14] that I may stand before the people of
Jerusalem
and tell them all the things for which I
praise you.
I will rejoice because you saved me.

[15] The heathen have dug a pit and fallen in;
they have set a trap and been caught in
it.
[16] The Lord has revealed himself by his right-
eous judgments,
and the wicked are trapped by their
own deeds.

[17] Death is the destiny of all the wicked,
of all those who reject God.
[18] The needy will not always be neglected;
the hope of the oppressed will not be
crushed forever.

[19] Come, Lord! Don't let men defy you!
Bring the heathen before you and judge
them.
[20] Make them afraid, Lord;
make them know that they are only
men.

A Prayer for Help

10 Why are you so far away, Lord?
Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?
2 The wicked are proud and persecute the poor;
may they be caught in the traps they have made.

3 The wicked man brags about his evil desires;
the greedy man curses and rejects the Lord.
4 In his pride the wicked man says,
"God will not punish me! He doesn't care!"
This is what the wicked man thinks.

5 He succeeds in all he does.
He cannot understand God's judgments;
he sneers at his enemies.
6 He says to himself, "I will never fail;
I will never be in trouble."
7 His speech is filled with curses, lies, and threats;
he is quick to speak hateful and evil words.

8 He hides himself in the villages;
he waits there and murders innocent people.
He spies on his helpless victim;
9 he waits in his hiding place like a lion.
He lies in wait for his victim;
he catches him in his trap and drags him away.

10 The helpless victim lies crushed;
brute strength has defeated him.
11 The wicked man says to himself, "God doesn't care!

He has closed his eyes, and will never
see me!"

12 Come, Lord, and save me!
Don't forget the oppressed, God!
13 How can the wicked man despise God,
and say to himself, "He will not punish
me"?

14 But you do see; you take notice of suffer-
ing and grief
and are always ready to help.
The helpless man commits himself to you,
because you have always helped the
needy.

15 Break the power of wicked and evil men;
punish them for their wickedness,
until their punishment is complete.

16 The Lord is king forever and ever,
and the heathen will disappear from his
land.

17 You will listen, Lord, to the prayers of the
lowly;
you will give them courage.
18 You will hear the cries of the oppressed
and the orphans
and judge in their favor,
so that mortal men may cause terror no
more.

Confidence in the Lord

11 I trust in the Lord for safety.
How foolish of you to say to me,
"Fly away like a bird to the mountains,
2 because the wicked draw their bows
and aim their arrows
to shoot at good men in the darkness.

[3] There is nothing a good man can do
when things fall apart."

[4] The Lord is in his holy temple;
he has his throne in heaven.
He watches all men
and knows what they do.
[5] He examines both the good and the wicked;
he hates the lawless with all his heart.

[6] He sends down flaming coals[c] and burning sulfur on the wicked;
he punishes them with a scorching flame.
[7] The Lord is righteous and loves good deeds;
those who obey him will live in his presence.

A Prayer for Help

12 Save me, Lord!
There are no good men left,
and honest men can no longer be found.
[2] All men lie to one another,
and deceive each other with flattery.

[3] Silence those flattering tongues, Lord,
and close those boastful mouths!
[4] They say, "We will speak as we wish,
and no one will stop us.
Who can tell us what to say?"

[5] "But now I will come," says the Lord,
"because the needy are oppressed,
and the persecuted groan in pain.
I will give them the security they long for!"

[c] *One ancient translation* coals; *Hebrew* traps.

6 The Lord's promises can be trusted;
they are as genuine as silver,
refined seven times in the furnace.

7 Keep us always safe, Lord,
and preserve us from such people.
8 Wicked men are everywhere,
and everyone praises what is evil.

A Prayer for Help

13 How long will you forget me, Lord?
Forever?
How much longer will you hide yourself from me?
2 How long must I endure pain?[1]
How long will sorrow fill my heart day and night?
How long will my enemies triumph over me?

3 Look at me, Lord my God, and answer me.
Restore my strength, so that I will not die.
4 Then my enemies cannot say, "We have defeated him!"
They cannot be glad over my downfall.

5 But I rely on your constant love;
I will be glad, because you will save me.
6 I will sing to the Lord,
because he has been good to me.

The Wickedness of Men

(Psalm 53)

14 Fools say to themselves,
"God doesn't matter!"
They are all corrupt,

[1] *One ancient translation* endure pain; *Hebrew* make plans.

they have done terrible things;
there is no one who does what is right.

2 The Lord looks down at men from heaven
to see if there are any who are wise,
any who worship him.
3 But they have all gone wrong,
they are all equally bad;
not one of them does what is right,
not a single one.

4 "Don't they know?" asks the Lord.
"Are all these evildoers ignorant?
They live by robbing my people
and do not pray to me."

5 But they will become terrified,
because God is with those who obey him.
6 They make fun of the plans of the helpless man,
because he trusts in the Lord.

7 How I pray that salvation
will come to Israel from Zion!
When the Lord makes his people prosperous again,
Jacob's descendants will be happy;
the people of Israel will be glad.

What God Requires

15 Lord, who may live in your temple?
Who may stay on Zion, your sacred hill?

2 The man who obeys God in everything,
and always does what is right;
whose words are true and sincere,
3 and who does not slander others.
He does no wrong to his friends
and does not spread rumors about his neighbors.

4 He despises those whom God rejects,
but honors those who obey the Lord.
He always does what he promises,
no matter how much it may cost him.
5 He makes loans without charging interest
and cannot be bribed to testify against
the innocent.

He who does these things will never fail.

A Prayer of Confidence

16 Protect me, God, because I come to
you for safety.
2 I say to the Lord, "You are my Lord;
all the good things I have come from
you."

3 How excellent are the Lord's faithful peo-
ple![g]
My greatest pleasure is to be with them.

4 Those who rush to other gods
bring many troubles on themselves.[g]
I will not take part in their sacrifices;
I will not worship their gods.

5 You, Lord, are all I have,
and you give me all I need;
my life is in your hands.
6 How wonderful are your gifts to me;
how good they are!

7 I praise the Lord, because he guides me,
and in the night my conscience warns
me.
8 I am always aware of the Lord's presence;
he is near, and nothing can shake me.

9 And so I am full of happiness and joy,
and I always feel secure;

[g] *Hebrew unclear.*

10 because you will not allow me to go to the
world of the dead,
you will not abandon to the depths be-
low the one you love.

11 You will show me the path that leads to
life;
your presence fills me with joy,
and your help brings pleasure forever.

The Prayer of an Innocent Man

17 Listen, Lord, to my righteous plea;
pay attention to my cry for help!
Listen to my prayer,
because there is no deceit in me.
2 You will judge in my favor,
because you know what is right.

3 You know my heart;
you come to me at night.
You have examined me completely
and found no evil desire in me;
I speak no evil, 4as others do;
I have obeyed your command
and have not followed[h] the path of vio-
lence.
5 I have always walked in your way
and have not strayed from it.

6 I pray to you, God, because you answer
me;
so turn to me and listen to my words.
7 Reveal your wonderful love, Savior;
at your side we are safe from our ene-
mies.

8 Protect me, as you would your very eyes;
hide me in the shadow of your wings
9 from the attacks of the wicked.

[h] *One ancient translation* have not followed; *Hebrew* have followed.

My enemies, full of hate, surround me;
10 they have no pity and speak proudly.
11 Now they are around me wherever I turn,
watching for a chance to pull me down.
12 They are like lions, wanting to tear me to pieces,
like young lions, waiting for me in their hiding places.

13 Come, Lord, oppose my enemies and defeat them!
Save me from the wicked by your sword;
14 save me from them by your power,
from those who in this life have all they want.
Punish them with the sufferings you have stored up for them;
may there be enough for their children,
and some left over for their children's children!

15 Because I am righteous, I will see you,
and when I awake, your presence will fill me with joy.

David's Song of Victory[i]

(2 Samuel 22.1–51)

18 How I love you, Lord!
You are my defender.
2 The Lord is my Savior;
he is my strong fortress.
My God is my protection,
and I am safe with him.
He protects me like a shield;
he defends me and keeps me safe.
3 I call to the Lord,
and he saves me from my enemies.
Praise the Lord!

Hebrew title: These are the words that David, the Lord's servant, sang to the Lord on the day the Lord saved him from Saul and all his other enemies.

[4] Death pulled its ropes tight around me;
the waves of destruction rolled over me.
[5] Death pulled its ropes tight around me,
and the grave set its trap for me.

[6] In my trouble I called to the Lord;
I called to my God for help.
In his temple he heard my voice;
my cry for help reached his ears.

[7] Then the earth trembled and shook;
the foundations of the mountains rocked and quivered,
because God was angry!
[8] Smoke poured out of his nostrils,
a consuming flame and burning coals from his mouth.
[9] He pulled back the sky and came down,
with a dark cloud under his feet.
[10] He flew down on the backs of the cherubim;
he traveled swiftly on the wings of the wind.
[11] He covered himself with darkness;
thick clouds, full of water, were around him.
[12] Hailstones and flaming coals
came from the lightning before him
and broke through the dark clouds.

[13] Then the Lord thundered from the sky;
and the voice of the Most High was heard. *j*
[14] He shot his arrows, and scattered his enemies;
with flashes of lightning he sent them running.
[15] The bottom of the ocean was revealed,

j *One ancient translation (and see 2 Sam. 22.14)* was heard: *Hebrew adds* hailstones and flaming coals.

and the foundations of the earth were
uncovered,
when you rebuked your enemies, Lord,
and roared at them in anger.

16 The Lord reached down from heaven and
took hold of me;
he pulled me out of the deep waters.
17 He rescued me from my powerful ene-
mies,
and from all those who hate me—
they were too strong for me!
18 When I was in trouble they attacked me,
but the Lord protected me.
19 He helped me out of danger;
he saved me because he was pleased
with me.

20 The Lord rewards me because I am right-
eous;
he blesses me because I am innocent.
21 I have obeyed the law of the Lord;
I have not rebelled against my God.
22 I have observed all his laws;
I have not disobeyed his commands.
23 He knows that I am faultless,
that I have kept myself from evil.
24 And so he rewards me because I am right-
eous,
because he knows that I am innocent.

25 You, Lord, are faithful to those who are
faithful,
and completely good to those who are
perfect.
26 You are pure to those who are pure,
but hostile to those who are wicked.
27 You save those who are humble,
but you humble those who are proud.

28 The Lord gives me light;
my God dispels my darkness.

[29] He gives me strength to attack my enemies,
the power to overcome their defenses.

[30] This God—how perfect are his deeds,
how dependable are his words!
He is like a shield
for all who seek his protection.

[31] The Lord alone is God;
God alone is our defense.
[32] He is the God who makes me strong,
who makes my pathway safe.
[33] He makes me surefooted as a deer;
he keeps me safe on the mountains.
[34] He trains me for battle,
so that I can use the strongest bow.

[35] You, Lord, protect me and save me;
your care has made me great,
and your power has kept me safe.
[36] You have kept me from being captured,
and I have never fallen.
[37] I chase my enemies and catch them;
I do not stop until I defeat them.
[38] I strike them down, and they cannot rise;
they lie defeated at my feet.
[39] You give me strength for the battle
and victory over my enemies.
[40] You make my enemies run from me;
I destroy those who hate me.
[41] They cry for help, but no one can save them;
they call to the Lord, but he does not answer.
[42] I crush them, so that they become like dust,
which the wind blows away.
I trample on them, like mud in the streets.

[43] You save me from a rebellious people,
and make me ruler over the nations;

people I did not know are now my subjects.
44 When they hear me they obey;
foreigners bow before me.
45 They lose their courage
and come trembling from their fortresses.

46 The Lord lives! Praise my defender!
God is my Savior! Proclaim his greatness!
47 He gives me victory over my enemies;
he subdues the peoples under me
48 and saves me from my foes.

You, Lord, give me victory over my enemies
and protect me from violent men.
49 And so I will praise you among the nations;
I will sing praise to you.

50 God gives great victories to his king;
he shows constant love to the one he has chosen,
to David and his descendants forever.

God's Glory in Creation

19 How clearly the sky reveals God's glory!
How plainly it shows what he has done!
2 Each day announces it to the following day;
each night repeats it to the next.
3 No speech or words are used,
no sound is heard;
4 yet their voice[A] goes out to all the world,
their message reaches the ends of the earth.

[A] *Some ancient translations* voice; *Hebrew* line.

God set up a tent in the sky for the sun:
5 it comes out like a bridegroom striding
from his house,
like an athlete, eager to run a race.
6 It starts at one end of the sky
and goes around to the other.
Nothing can hide from its heat.

The Law of the Lord

7 The law of the Lord is perfect;
it gives new life.
The commands of the Lord are trustworthy,
giving wisdom to those who lack it.
8 The rules of the Lord are right,
and those who obey them are happy.
His commandments are completely just
and give understanding to the mind.
9 The worship of the Lord is good;
it will continue forever.
The judgments of the Lord are just,
they are always fair.
10 They are more desirable than gold,
even the finest gold.
They are sweeter than honey,
even the purest honey.
11 They give knowledge to me, your servant;
I am rewarded for obeying them.

12 No one can see his own errors;
deliver me from hidden faults!
13 Keep me safe, also, from open sins;
don't let them rule over me.
Then I shall be perfect
and free from terrible sin.

14 May my words and my thoughts be acceptable to you,
O Lord, my refuge and my redeemer!

A Prayer for Victory

20 May the Lord answer you in the day
of trouble!
May the God of Jacob protect you!
2 May he send you help from his temple
and give you aid from Mount Zion!
3 May he accept all your offerings
and be pleased with all your sacrifices.
4 May he give you what you desire
and make all your plans succeed.
5 Then we will shout for joy over your victory
and celebrate your triumph by praising our God.
May the Lord answer all your requests!

6 Now I know that the Lord gives victory to his chosen king;
he answers him from his holy heaven,
and by his great power makes him victorious.
7 Some trust in their war chariots,
and others in their horses,
but we trust in the power of the Lord our God!
8 They will stumble and fall,
but we will rise and stand firm!

9 Give victory to the king, Lord;
the Lord will answer us when we call.

Praise for Victory

21 The king is glad, Lord, because you gave him strength;
he is full of joy, because you made him victorious.
2 You have given him what he wanted;
you have answered his request.

3 You came to him with great blessings
and set a gold crown on his head.

4 He asked for life, and you gave it;
a long and lasting life.

5 His glory is great because of your help;
you have given him fame and majesty.
6 Your blessings are upon him forever,
and your presence fills him with gladness.

7 The king trusts in the Most High;
and because of the Lord's constant love
he will be king forever.
8 The king will catch all his enemies;
he will capture all those who hate him.
9 He will destroy them like a blazing fire,
when he appears.

The Lord will devour them in his anger,
and fire will consume them.
10 The king will kill all their children;
he will slaughter all their descendants.

11 They make evil plans and plot against him,
but they will not succeed.
12 He will shoot his arrows at them,
and make them turn and run.

13 Come, Lord, with your strength!
We will sing and praise your power.

A Cry of Anguish and a Song of Praise

22 My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?
I have cried desperately for help,
but it still does not come!
2 During the day I call to you, my God,
but you do not answer;
I call at night,
but get no rest.
3 But you are enthroned as the Holy One,
the one whom Israel praises.

4 Our ancestors put their trust in you;
they trusted you, and you saved them.
5 They called to you and escaped from danger;
they trusted in you and were not disappointed.

6 But I am no longer a man; I am a worm,
despised and scorned by all!
7 All who see me make fun of me;
they stick out their tongues and shake their heads.
8 "You relied on the Lord," they say. "Why doesn't he save you?
If the Lord likes you, why doesn't he help you?"

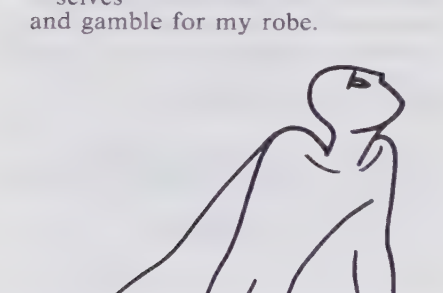
9 It was you who brought me safely through birth,
and when I was a baby you kept me safe.
10 I have relied on you ever since I was born;
since my birth you have been my God.
11 Do not stay away from me!
Trouble is near,
and there is no one to help.

12 Many enemies surround me like bulls;
they are all around me,
like fierce bulls from the land of Bashan.
13 They open their mouths like lions,
roaring and tearing at me.

14 My strength is gone,
gone like water spilled on the ground.
All my bones are out of joint;
my heart feels like melted wax inside me.
15 My throat[1] is as dry as dust,
and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth.
You have left me for dead in the dust.

[1]My throat: *Hebrew* My strength.

16 A gang of evil men is around me;
like a pack of dogs, they close in on me;
they tear[m] my hands and feet.
17 All my bones can be seen.
My enemies look at me and stare;
18 they divide my clothes among themselves
and gamble for my robe.



Hurry and help me, my Savior!

19 Don't stay away from me, Lord!
Hurry and help me, my Savior!
20 Save me from the sword;
save my life from those dogs.
21 Rescue me from those lions;
I am helpless[n] before those wild bulls.

22 I will tell my people what you have done;
I will praise you in their meeting:
23 "Praise him, you servants of the Lord!
Honor him, you descendants of Jacob;
worship him, you people of Israel!
24 He does not neglect the poor or ignore
their suffering;

[m] *Some ancient translations* they tear; *others* they tie; *Hebrew* like a lion. [n] *Some ancient translations* I am helpless; *Hebrew* you answered me.

he does not keep away from them,
but answers when they call for help."

25 In the full assembly I will praise you for
what you have done;
in the presence of all who obey you
I will offer the sacrifices I promised.
26 The poor will eat as much as they want;
those who come to the Lord will praise
him.
May they prosper forever!

27 All nations will remember the Lord;
from every part of the world they will
turn to him;
all races will worship him.
28 The Lord is king,
and he rules over the nations.

29 All proud men will bow down to him;[o]
all mortal men will bow down before
him,
all those who are bound to die.
30 Future generations will serve him;
men will speak of the Lord to the com-
ing generation.[p]

31 People not yet born will be told:
"The Lord saved his people!"

The Lord Our Shepherd

23 The Lord is my shepherd;
I have everything I need.
2 He lets me rest in fields of green grass
and leads me to quiet pools of fresh
water.
3 He gives me new strength.

[o] will bow down to him: *Hebrew* will eat and bow down. [p] *One ancient translation* to the coming generation; *Hebrew* to the generation. They will come.

He guides me in the right way,
as he has promised.
4 Even if that way goes through deepest darkness,
I will not be afraid, Lord,
because you are with me!
Your shepherd's rod and staff keep me safe.

5 You prepare a banquet for me,
where all my enemies can see me;
you welcome me by pouring ointment on my head
and filling my cup to the brim.
6 Certainly your goodness and love will be with me as long as I live;
and your house will be my home forever.

The Great King

24 The world and all that is in it belong to the Lord;
the earth and all who live on it are his.
2 He built it on the deep waters beneath the earth
and laid its foundations in the ocean depths.

3 Who has the right to go up the Lord's hill?
Who is allowed to enter his holy temple?
4 He who is pure in act and in thought,
who does not worship idols,
or make false promises.
5 The Lord will bless him;
God his Savior will declare him innocent.
6 Such are the people who come to God,
who come into the presence of the God of Jacob.

7 Fling wide the gates,
open the ancient doors,
and the great king will come in!
8 Who is this great king?
He is the Lord, strong and mighty,
the Lord, victorious in battle!

9 Fling wide the gates,
open the ancient doors,
and the great king will come in!
10 Who is this great king?
The Lord of armies, he is the great king!

A Prayer for Guidance and Protection

25 To you, Lord, I offer my prayer;
2 in you, my God, I trust.
Save me from the shame of defeat;
don't let my enemies gloat over me!
3 Defeat does not come to those who trust in you,
but to those who are quick to rebel against you.

4 Teach me your ways, Lord,
make them known to me.
5 Teach me to live according to your truth,
because you are my Savior.
All day long I trust in you.

6 Lord, remember your kindness and constant love,
which you have shown from long ago.
7 Forgive the sins and errors of my youth.
Because of your constant love and goodness,
remember me, Lord!

8 The Lord is righteous and good;
he teaches sinners the way they should go.
9 He leads the humble in the right way

and teaches them his will.
10 In love and faithfulness he leads
all who obey his covenant and his commands.

11 Keep your promise, Lord, and forgive my sins,
because they are many.
12 Those who obey the Lord
will learn from him the way they should go.
13 They will always be prosperous,
and their children will live safely in the land.
14 The Lord is the friend of those who obey him,
and he teaches them his covenant.

15 I look to the Lord for help at all times,
and he rescues me from danger.
16 Turn to me, Lord, and be merciful to me,
because I am alone and weak.
17 Relieve me of all my worries
and save me from all my troubles.
18 Consider all my distress and suffering
and forgive all my sins.

19 Look at all the enemies I have;
see how much they hate me!
20 Protect me and save me;
keep me from defeat,
because I come to you for protection.
21 May my goodness and honesty preserve me,
because I trust in you.

22 From all their troubles,
save your people, God!

The Prayer of a Good Man

26 Declare that I am innocent, Lord,
because I do what is right
and trust you completely.
2 Examine me and test me, Lord;
judge my desires and thoughts.
3 Your constant love guides me;
your faithfulness always leads me.

4 I do not keep company with worthless
men;
I have nothing to do with hypocrites.
5 I hate the company of evil men
and avoid the wicked.

6 Lord, I wash my hands to show that I am
innocent
and march in worship around your al-
tar.
7 I sing a hymn of thanksgiving
and tell all your wonderful deeds.

8 Lord, I love the house where you live,
the place where your glory dwells.
9 Do not destroy me with the sinners;
spare me from the fate of murderers—
10 men who do evil at all times
and are always ready to bribe.

11 As for me, I do what is right;
be merciful to me and save me!

12 I am safe from all dangers;
in public worship I praise the Lord!

A Prayer of Praise

27 The Lord is my light and my salva-
tion;
I will fear no one.

The Lord protects me from all danger;
I will not be afraid.

2 When evil men attack me and try to kill
me,
they stumble and fall.
3 Even if a whole army surrounds me,
I will not be afraid;
even if my enemies attack me,
I will still trust God.

4 I have asked the Lord for one thing;
one thing only do I want:
to live in the Lord's house all my life,
to marvel at his goodness,
and to ask his guidance there.

5 In times of trouble he will protect me in
his shelter;
he will keep me safe in his temple,
and place me securely on a high rock.
6 So I will triumph over my enemies around
me.
With shouts of joy I will offer sacrifices
in his temple;
I will sing, I will praise the Lord!

7 Hear me, Lord, when I call to you!
Be merciful and answer me!
8 "Come to me," you said.[q]
I will come to you, Lord;
9 don't hide yourself from me!

Don't be angry with me;
don't turn your servant away.
You have been my help;
don't leave me, don't abandon me,
God, my Savior!

[q] "Come to me," you said; *Hebrew* I said to you, "Come to me" (you *is singular,* Come *is plural).*

10 My father and mother may abandon me,
but the Lord will take care of me.

11 Teach me, Lord, what you want me to do
and lead me along a safe path,
because I have many enemies.
12 Do not abandon me to my enemies,
who attack me with lies and threats.

13 Certainly I will live to see
the Lord's goodness to his people.
14 Trust in the Lord!
Have faith, don't despair.
Trust in the Lord!

A Prayer for Help

28 Lord, my defender, I call to you.
Hear my cry!
If you do not answer me,
I will be among those who go down to
the land of the dead.
2 Hear me when I cry to you for help,
with my hands lifted toward your holy
temple.
3 Do not condemn me with the wicked,
with those who do evil—
men whose words are friendly,
but whose hearts are filled with hate.

4 Punish them for what they have done,
for all the evil they have committed.
Punish them for all their deeds;
give them what they deserve!
5 They take no notice of what the Lord has
done,
or of what he has made;
so he will punish them
and destroy them forever.

6 Give praise to the Lord;
he has heard my cry for help!

7 The Lord protects and defends me;
I trust in him.
He has helped me, and so I am glad
and sing hymns of praise to him.

8 The Lord protects his people;
he defends and saves his chosen king.
9 Save your people, Lord,
and bless those who are yours!
Be their shepherd,
and take care of them forever.

The Voice of the Lord in the Storm

29 Praise the Lord, you gods;
praise his glory and power.
2 Praise the Lord's glorious name,
bow down before the Holy One when
he appears.

3 The Lord's voice is heard on the seas;
the glorious God thunders,
and his voice echoes over the ocean.
4 The Lord's voice is heard
in all its might and majesty!

5 The Lord's voice breaks the cedars,
even the cedars of Lebanon.
6 He causes the mountains of Lebanon to
jump like calves,
and Mount Hermon to leap like a young
bull.

7 The Lord's voice makes the lightning
flash.
8 His voice makes the desert shake;
he shakes the desert of Kadesh.
9 The Lord's voice makes the deer give
birth,
and leaves the trees stripped bare,
while in his temple all shout, "Glory to
God!"

10 The Lord rules over the deep waters;
he rules as king forever.
11 The Lord gives strength to his people,
and blesses them with peace.

A Prayer of Thanksgiving[r]

30 I praise you, Lord, because you have saved me
and kept my enemies from gloating over me.
2 I cried to you for help, Lord my God,
and you healed me.
3 You brought me back from the world of the dead.
I was with those who go down to the depths below,
but you restored my life.
4 Sing praise to the Lord,
his faithful people!
Remember what the Holy One has done
and give him thanks!
5 His anger lasts only a moment,
his goodness for a lifetime.
There may be tears during the night,
but joy comes in the morning.

6 I felt secure, and said to myself,
"I will never be defeated."
7 You are good to me, Lord;
you have kept me safe as in a mountain fortress.
But when you hid yourself from me,
I was filled with fear.

8 I called to you, Lord;
I begged for your help.
9 What good will come from my death?
What profit from my going to the grave?
Are dead people able to praise you?
Can they proclaim your unfailing goodness?

[r] *Hebrew title:* A song for the dedication of the temple.

10 Hear me, Lord, and be merciful!
Help me, Lord!

11 You have changed my sadness into a joyful dance;
you have taken off my clothes of mourning,
and given me clothes of joy.
12 So I will not be silent;
I will sing praise to you.
Lord, you are my God,
I will give thanks to you forever.

A Prayer of Trust in God

31 I come to you, Lord, for protection;
never let me be defeated.
You are a righteous God;
save me, I pray!
2 Hear me! Save me now!
Be my refuge, to protect me;
my defense, to save me.

3 You are my refuge and defense;
guide me and lead me as you have promised.
4 Keep me safe from the trap that has been set for me;
you are my shelter.
5 I place myself in your care.
You will save me, Lord;
you are a faithful God.

6 You hate those who worship false gods;
but I trust in you.
7 I will be glad and rejoice,
because of your constant love.
You see my suffering;
you know my trouble.
8 You have not let my enemies capture me;
you have kept me safe.

9 Be merciful to me, Lord,
because I am in trouble;
my eyes are tired from so much crying;
I am completely worn out!
10 Sorrow has shortened my life,
and weeping has reduced my years.
I am weak from all my troubles;[3]
even my bones are wasting away.

11 All my enemies make fun of me;
my neighbors scorn[4] me;
those who know me are afraid of me;
when they see me in the street, they run
away.
12 I am forgotten by all, as though I had died;
I am like something thrown away.
13 I hear many enemies whispering;
terror is all around me!
They are making plans against me,
plotting to kill me.

14 But my trust is in you, Lord;
you are my God.
15 I am always in your care;
save me from my enemies
and from those who persecute me.
16 I am your servant;
look on me with kindness;
save me because of your constant love!
17 I call to you, Lord;
don't let me be defeated!
May the wicked be defeated;
may they be silent in the world of the
dead.
18 Silence those liars—
all the proud and arrogant,
who speak with contempt about right-
eous men!

19 How wonderful are the good things

[3] *Some ancient translations* troubles; *Hebrew* iniquity. [4] scorn; *Hebrew* exceedingly.

you keep for those who fear you!
How wonderful is what you do in the sight of everyone,
protecting those who trust you.
20 You hide them in the safety of your presence
from the plots of men;
in a safe shelter you hide them
from the insults of their enemies.

21 Praise the Lord!
How wonderfully he showed his love for me,
when I was surrounded and attacked!
22 I was afraid, and thought
that you had thrown me out of your presence.
But you heard my cry,
when I called to you for help.

23 Love the Lord, all his faithful people!
The Lord protects the faithful,
but harshly punishes the proud.
24 Be strong, be courageous,
all who hope in the Lord!

Confession and Forgiveness

32 Happy is the man whose sins are forgiven,
whose transgressions are pardoned.
2 Happy is the man whom the Lord does not accuse of doing wrong,
who is free from all deceit.

3 When I did not confess my sins,
I was worn out from crying all day long.
4 Day and night you punished me, Lord;
my strength was completely drained,
as moisture is dried up by the summer heat.

5 Then I confessed my sins to you;
I did not conceal my wrongdoings.
I decided to confess them to you,
and you forgave all my transgressions.

6 So all your loyal people should pray to you in times of need;[u]
when a great flood comes rushing, it will not reach them.
7 You are my hiding place;
you will save me from trouble.
I sing aloud of your salvation,
because you protect me.

8 The Lord says, "I will teach you the way you should go;
I will instruct you and advise you.
9 Don't be stupid like a horse or a mule,
which must be controlled with a bit and bridle,
to make it obey you."

10 The wicked will have to suffer,
but those who trust in the Lord
are protected by his constant love.
11 All who are righteous, be glad and rejoice,
because of what the Lord has done!
All who obey him, shout for joy!

A Song of Praise

33 All you that are righteous,
be glad because of what the Lord has done;
praise him, all you that obey him!
2 Give thanks to the Lord with the harp,
sing to him with stringed instruments.
3 Sing a new song to him,
play the harp with skill, and sing aloud!

[u] *Some ancient translations* need; *Hebrew* finding only.

4 The words of the Lord are true,
and all his works are dependable.
5 The Lord loves what is righteous and just;
his constant love fills the earth.

6 The Lord created the heavens by his command,
the sun, moon, and stars by his spoken word.
7 He gathered all the seas into one place;
he shut up the ocean depths in storerooms.

8 Fear the Lord, all the earth!
Fear him, all peoples of the world!
9 When he spoke, the world was created;
at his command everything appeared.

10 The Lord frustrates the purposes of the nations;
he keeps them from carrying out their plans.
11 But his plans endure forever,
his purposes last eternally.
12 Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord;
happy are the people he has chosen for his own!

13 The Lord looks down from heaven
and sees all mankind.
14 From where he rules he looks down
on all who live on earth.
15 He forms all their thoughts,
and knows everything they do.

16 A king does not win because of his powerful army;
a soldier does not triumph because of his strength.
17 War horses are useless for victory;
their great strength cannot save.

18 The Lord watches over those who fear
him,
those who trust in his constant love.
19 He saves them from death;
he keeps them alive in times of famine.

20 We put our hope in the Lord;
he is our helper and protector.
21 We are glad because of him;
we trust in his holy name.

22 May your constant love be with us, Lord,
as we put our hope in you.

In Praise of God's Goodness[r]

34 I will always thank the Lord;
I will never stop praising him.
2 I will praise him for what he has done;
may all who are oppressed listen and be
glad!
3 Proclaim with me the Lord's greatness;
let us praise his name together!

4 I prayed to the Lord and he answered me;
he freed me from all my fears.
5 The oppressed look to him and are glad;
they will never be disappointed.
6 The helpless call to him, and he answers;
he saves them from all their troubles.
7 His angel guards those who fear the Lord
and rescues them from danger.

8 Find out for yourself how good the Lord
is!
Happy is the man who finds safety with
him!
9 Fear the Lord, all his people;
those who fear him have all they need.

[r] *Hebrew title:* David pretended to be crazy in the presence of Abimelech, who sent him away; after leaving, David wrote this psalm.

10 Even lions lack food and go hungry,
but those who obey the Lord lack nothing good.

11 Come, my young friends, and listen to me,
and I will teach you to fear the Lord.
12 Would you like to enjoy life?
Do you want long life and happiness?
13 Then keep from speaking evil
and from telling lies.
14 Turn away from evil and do good;
desire peace and do your best to have it.

15 The Lord watches over the righteous
and listens to their cries;
16 but he opposes those who do evil,
so that even their own people forget them.
17 Righteous men call to the Lord and he listens;
he rescues them from all their troubles.
18 The Lord is near to those who are discouraged;
he saves those who have lost all hope.

19 The good man suffers many troubles,
but the Lord saves him from them all;
20 the Lord preserves him completely;
not one of his bones is broken.
21 Evil will kill the wicked;
those who hate the righteous will be punished.

22 The Lord will save his servants;
those who go to him for protection will be spared.

A Prayer for Help

35 Oppose those who oppose me, Lord,
and fight those who fight me!
2 Take your shield and armor

and come to my help.
[3] Lift up your spear and war ax
against those who pursue me.
Tell me that you are my Savior!

[4] May those who try to kill me
be defeated and disgraced!
May those who plot against me
be turned back and confused!
[5] May they be like straw blown by the wind,
as the angel of the Lord chases them!
[6] May their path be dark and slippery,
while the angel of the Lord strikes them
down!

[7] Without any reason they laid a trap for me
and dug a deep hole to catch me.
[8] But destruction will catch them before
they know it;
they will be caught in their own trap
and fall into the hole they dug![w]

[9] Then I will be glad because of the Lord;
I will be happy because he saved me.
[10] With all my heart I will say to the Lord,
"There is no one like you!
You protect the weak from the strong,
the poor and needy from the oppressor!"

[11] Evil men testify against me
and accuse me of crimes I know nothing
about.
[12] They pay me back evil for good,
and I am full of despair.
[13] But when they were sick, I dressed in
mourning;
I deprived myself of food;
I prayed with my head bowed low,
[14] as I would pray for a friend or a brother.

[w] *One ancient translation* the hole they dug; *Hebrew* destruction

I went around bent over in mourning,
as one who mourns for his mother.

15 When I was in trouble, they were all glad
and gathered around me to make fun of
me;
strangers beat me
and kept striking me.
16 They made me suffer, and made fun of me[x]
glaring at me with hate.

17 How much longer, Lord, will you look on?
Rescue me from their attacks;
save my life from these lions!
18 Then I will thank you in the large assem-
bly,
I will praise you before a great crowd.

19 Don't let my enemies, those liars,
gloat over my defeat!
Don't let those who hate me for no reason
wink with delight over my sorrow!

20 They do not speak in a friendly way;
instead they invent all kinds of lies
about peace-loving people.
21 They accuse me, shouting,
"We saw what you did!"
22 But you, Lord, have seen this.
So don't be silent, Lord;
don't keep yourself far away!
23 Wake up, Lord, and defend me;
rise up, my God, and plead my cause.
24 You are righteous, Lord, so declare me
innocent;
do not let my enemies gloat over me,
my God!
25 Do not let them say to themselves,
"Well! Just what we wanted!"

[x] *One ancient translation* they made me suffer, and made fun of me; *Hebrew* with the profane of mockers of a cake.

Do not let them say,
"We have defeated him!"

[26] May those who gloat over my suffering
be completely defeated and confused;
may those who claim to be better than I
am
be covered with shame and disgrace!

[27] May those who are glad that I am acquit-
ted
shout with joy and say again and again,
"Great is the Lord;
he is happy with the success of his serv-
ant!"
[28] Then I will proclaim your righteousness,
and I will praise you all day long.

The Wickedness of Man

36 Sin speaks to the wicked man
deep in his heart;
he rejects God, and does not fear him.
[2] Because he has such a high opinion of
himself,
he thinks that God will not discover
and condemn his sin.
[3] His speech is evil and full of lies;
he is no longer wise enough to do good.
[4] He makes evil plans as he lies in bed;
his conduct is not good,
and he does not reject what is evil.

The Goodness of God

[5] Lord, your constant love reaches the
heavens,
your faithfulness extends to the skies.
[6] Your righteousness is firm like the great
mountains,

your judgments are like the depths of the sea.
You, Lord, care for men and animals.

7 How precious, God, is your constant love!
Men find protection under the shadow of your wings.
8 They feast on the abundant food from your house;
you give them to drink from the river of your goodness.
9 You are the source of all life,
and because of your light we see the light.

10 Continue to love those who know you
and to do good to those who are righteous.
11 Do not let proud men attack me
or wicked men make me run away.
12 See where evil men have fallen!
There they lie, unable to rise.

The Destiny of the Wicked and of the Good

37 Don't be worried on account of the wicked;
don't be jealous of those who do wrong;
2 they will disappear like grass that dries up;
they will die like plants that wither.

3 Trust in the Lord and do good;
live in the land and be safe.
4 Seek your happiness with the Lord,
and he will give you what you most desire.

5 Give yourself to the Lord;
trust in him, and he will help you;
6 he will cause your goodness to shine as the light
and your righteousness as the noonday sun.

7 Be calm before the Lord, and wait patiently for him to act;
don't be worried about those who prosper
or those who succeed in their evil plans.

8 Don't be angry; don't get mad!
Don't be worried! It won't do you any good.
9 Those who trust in the Lord will live safely in the land,
but the wicked will be driven out.

10 In just a little while, the wicked will disappear;
you may look for them, but you will not find them;
11 but those who are gentle will live safely in the land
and enjoy complete peace.

12 The wicked man plots against the good man
and glares at him with hate.
13 The Lord laughs at the wicked man,
because he knows that he will soon be destroyed.

14 The wicked draw their swords and bend their bows
to kill the poor and needy,
to slaughter men who are good;
15 but they will be stabbed by their own swords,
and their bows will be smashed.

16 The little that a good man owns
is worth more than the wealth of all the wicked;
17 because the Lord will take away the strength of the wicked,
but protect those who are good.

18 The Lord takes care of those who obey
him,
and the land will be theirs forever.
19 They will not suffer when times are bad;
they will have enough in time of famine.
20 But the wicked will die;
the enemies of the Lord will vanish like
wild flowers;
they will disappear like smoke.

21 The wicked man borrows, and doesn't pay
back,
but the good man is generous and lib-
eral.
22 Those who are blessed by the Lord will
live safely in the land,
but those who are cursed by him will be
driven out.

23 The Lord guides a man safely in the way
he should go
and is pleased with his conduct.
24 If he falls, he will not stay down,
because the Lord will help him up.

25 I am old now and no longer a boy,
but I have never seen a good man aban-
doned by the Lord,
or his children begging for food.
26 At all times he gives freely and lends to
others,
and his children are a blessing.

27 Turn away from evil and do good,
and you will live in the land forever;
28 because the Lord loves what is right,
and he does not abandon his faithful
people.
He protects them always,
but the descendants of the wicked will
be driven out.

29 The righteous will live safely in the land
and possess it forever.

30 The good man's words are wise,
and he speaks of what is right.
31 He keeps the law of his God in his heart
and never departs from it.

32 The wicked man watches the good man
and tries to kill him;
33 but the Lord will not abandon him to his
enemy's power,
or let him be condemned when he is on
trial.

34 Put your hope in the Lord and obey his
commandments;
he will give you the strength to possess
the land,
and you will see the wicked driven out.

35 I have seen a wicked man who was a
tyrant;
he towered over everyone like a cedar
of Lebanon;[1]
36 but later I[2] passed by and he wasn't there;
I looked for him, but couldn't find him.

37 Notice the good man, observe the right-
eous man;
a peaceful man has descendants;
38 but sinners are completely destroyed,
and their descendants are wiped out.

39 The Lord saves righteous men
and protects them in times of trouble.
40 He helps them and rescues them;
he saves them from the wicked,
because they go to him for protection.

[1] *One ancient translation* like a cedar of Lebanon; *Hebrew unclear.*
[2] *Some ancient translations* I; *Hebrew* he.

The Prayer of a Suffering Man

38 Lord, don't be angry and rebuke me!
Don't punish me in your anger!
2 You have punished me and wounded me;
you have struck me down.

3 Because of your anger, I am seriously ill;
my whole body is diseased because of my sins.
4 I am drowning in the flood of my sins;
I am weighted down by their heavy burden.

5 Because I have been foolish,
my sores stink and rot.
6 I am bent over, I am crushed;
I mourn all day long.
7 I am burning with fever,
and I am seriously ill.
8 I am utterly crushed and defeated;
my heart is troubled, and I groan with pain.

9 Lord, you know what I desire;
you hear all my groans.
10 My heart is pounding, my strength is gone,
and my eyes have lost their brightness.
11 My friends and neighbors will not come near me,
because of my sores;
even my family stays away from me.
12 Those who want to kill me lay traps for me,
and those who want to hurt me threaten to ruin me;
all day long they plot against me.

13 I am like a deaf man, and cannot hear,
like a dumb man, and cannot speak;

[14] I am like a man who does not answer,
because he cannot hear.

[15] I trust in you, Lord;
and you, Lord my God, will answer me.
[16] Don't let my enemies gloat over my distress;
don't let them boast about my downfall!
[17] I am about to fall,
and my pain is always with me.

[18] I confess my sins,
and they fill me with anxiety.
[19] My enemies are healthy and strong;
there are many who hate me for no reason.
[20] Those who pay back evil for good
are against me because I try to do right.

[21] Do not abandon me, Lord,
do not stay away, my God!
[22] Help me now, Lord my Savior!

The Confession of a Suffering Man

39 I said, "I will be careful about what I do
and not let my tongue make me sin;
I will not say anything
while evil men are near."
[2] I kept quiet, not saying a word,
not even about anything good!
But my suffering only became worse,
[3] and my heart was filled with anxiety.
The more I thought, the more troubled I became;
I could not keep from asking:
[4] "Lord, how long will I live?
When will I die?
Teach me how soon my life may end."

[5] How short you have made my life!
In your sight my lifetime seems nothing.

Indeed every living man is no more than
a puff of wind,
6 no more than a shadow!
All he does is for nothing;
he gathers wealth, but doesn't know
who will get it!

7 What, then, can I hope for, Lord?
I put my hope in you.
8 Save me from all my sins
and don't let fools make fun of me.
9 I will keep quiet, I will not say a word,
because you made me suffer like this.
10 Don't punish me any more!
I am about to die from your blows!
11 You punish a man's sins by your rebukes,
and like a moth, you destroy what he
loves.
Indeed a man is no more than a puff of
wind!

12 Hear my prayer, Lord,
and listen to my plea;
don't be silent when I cry to you!
Like all my ancestors,
I am only your guest for a little while.
13 Leave me alone so that I may have some
happiness,
before I go away and am no more.

A Song of Praise

40 I waited and waited for the Lord's
help;
then he listened to me and heard my
cry.
2 He pulled me out of a dangerous pit,
out of a muddy hole!
He set me safely on a rock
and made me secure.
3 He taught me to sing a new song,

a song of praise to our God.
Many who see this will be afraid
and will put their trust in the Lord.

4 Happy is the person who trusts the Lord,
who does not turn to idols,
or join those who worship false gods.
5 You have done many things for us, Lord my God;
there is no one like you!
You have made many wonderful plans for us.
If I tried to speak of all of them,
there would be more than I could tell.

6 You do not want sacrifices and offerings;
you do not ask for animals burned whole on the altar,
or sacrifices to take away sins.
Instead, you have given me ears to hear you,
7 and so I answered, "Here I am;
your instructions for me are in the book of the Law.
8 How I love to do your will, my God!
I keep your teaching in my heart."

9 In the meeting of all your people, Lord,
I told the good news that you save.
You know that I will never stop telling it.
10 I have not kept the news of salvation to myself;
I have always spoken of your faithfulness and help.
In the meeting of all your people I have not been silent
about your constant love and loyalty.

11 Lord, I know you will never stop being merciful to me!
Your love and loyalty will always keep me safe.

A Prayer for Help

(Psalm 70)

12 I am surrounded by many troubles—
too many to count!
My sins have caught up with me,
and I can no longer see;
they are more than the hairs on my head,
and I have lost my courage.
13 Save me, Lord! Help me now!
14 May those who try to kill me
be completely defeated and confused!
May those who are happy because of my troubles
be turned back and disgraced!
15 May those who make fun of me
be dismayed by their defeat!

16 May all who come to you
be glad and joyful!
May all who love your salvation
always say, "How great the Lord is!"

17 I am weak and helpless,
but you, Lord, think of me.
You are my helper and Savior—
do not delay, my God!

The Prayer of a Sick Man

41 Happy is the man who is concerned for the poor;
the Lord will help him when he is in trouble.
2 The Lord will protect him and preserve his life;
he will make him happy in the land;
he will not abandon him to the power of his enemies.
3 The Lord will help him when he is sick
and restore him to health.

4 I said, "I have sinned against you, Lord;
be merciful to me and cure me!"
5 My enemies say bad things about me.
They say, "When will he die and be
forgotten?"
6 Those who come to see me are not sincere;
they gather all the bad news about me,
and then go out and tell it everywhere.
7 All who hate me whisper to each other
about me,
they imagine the worst about me.
8 They say, "He is fatally ill
and will never leave his bed again."
9 Even my best friend, the one I trusted
most,
the one who shared my food,
has turned against me.

10 Be merciful to me, Lord, and restore my
health;
and I will pay my enemies back!
11 I will know that you are pleased with me,
because they will not triumph over me.
12 You will help me, because I do what is
right;
you will keep me in your presence
forever.

13 Let us praise the Lord, the God of Israel;
praise him now and forever!
Amen! Amen!

Book Two
(Psalms 42—72)

The Prayer of a Man in Exile

42 As a deer longs for a stream of cool
water,
so I long for you, God.

[2] I thirst for you, the living God;
when can I go and worship in your presence?
[3] Day and night I cry,
and tears are my only food;
all the time my enemies ask me,
"Where is your God?"

[4] My heart breaks when I remember the past,
when I went with the crowds to the house of God,
and led them as they walked along,
a happy crowd, singing and shouting praise to God.
[5] Why am I so sad?
Why am I troubled?
I will put my hope in God,
and once again I will praise him,
my Savior and my God.

[6] My heart is breaking,
so I will remember him;
in my exile in the region of the Jordan,
near Mount Hermon and Mount Mizar,
I will remember him.
[7] The ocean depths call out to each other,
and the waterfalls of God are roaring!
They are like the waves of sorrow
with which he floods my soul.
[8] May the Lord show his constant love every day!
May I sing praise to him every night,
and pray to God, who gives me life.

[9] To God, my defender, I say,
"Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I go on suffering
from the cruelty of my enemies?"
[10] I am crushed by their insults,
as they keep on asking me,
"Where is your God?"

11 Why am I so sad?
Why am I troubled?
I will put my hope in God,
and once again I will praise him,
my Savior and my God.

The Prayer of a Man in Exile

(Continuation of Psalm 42)

43 God, declare me innocent,
and defend my cause against the ungodly;
deliver me from lying and evil men!
2 You are my protector;
why have you abandoned me?
Why must I go on suffering
from the cruelty of my enemies?

3 Send your light and your truth;
may they lead me
and bring me back to Zion, your sacred hill,
and to your temple, where you live!
4 Then I will go to your altar, God,
because you give me joy and happiness;
I will play my harp and sing praise to you,
God, my God!

5 Why am I so sad?
Why am I troubled?
I will put my hope in God,
and once again I will praise him,
my Savior and my God.

A Prayer for Protection

44 With our own ears we have heard it, God—
our ancestors have told us about it,
about the great things you did in their time,

in the days of long ago:
[2] how you yourself drove out the heathen,
and established your people in their land;
how you punished the other nations,
but caused your own to prosper.
[3] Your people did not conquer the land with their swords;
they did not win it by their own power;
it was by your power and your strength,
by the assurance of your presence,
showing that you loved them.

[4] You are my king and my God;
you give[a] victory to your people.
[5] By your power we defeat our enemies;
by your presence we overcome our adversaries.
[6] I do not trust in my bow,
or trust in my sword to save me;
[7] because you have saved us from our enemies,
you have defeated those who hate us.
[8] We will always praise you
and give thanks to you forever.

[9] But now, God, you have rejected us and let us be defeated;
you no longer march out with our armies.
[10] You made us run away from our enemies,
and they took for themselves what was ours.
[11] You allowed us to be slaughtered like sheep;
you scattered us in foreign countries.
[12] You sold your own people for a small price,
and made no profit from the sale.

[a] *Some ancient translations* you give; *Hebrew* give!

11 Our neighbors see what you did to us,
and they mock us and make fun of us.
14 You made us an object of contempt
among the nations;
they shake their heads at us in scorn.
15 I am always in disgrace,
and I am covered with shame,
16 from hearing the sneers and insults
of my enemies and adversaries.

17 All this has happened to us
even though we have not forgotten you,
or broken the covenant you made with
us.
18 We have not been disloyal to you;
we have not disobeyed your commands.
19 Yet you left us helpless among the wild
animals;
you abandoned us in deepest darkness.

20 If we had stopped worshiping our God,
and prayed to a foreign god,
21 you would surely have discovered it,
because you know men's secret
thoughts.
22 But it is for your sake that we are being
killed all the time,
that we are treated like sheep to be
slaughtered.

23 Wake up, Lord! Why are you asleep?
Get up! Don't reject us forever!
24 Why are you hiding from us?
Don't forget our suffering and trouble!

25 We fall crushed to the ground;
we lie defeated in the dust.
26 Get up and help us!
Because of your constant love, save us!

A Royal Wedding Song

45 Beautiful words fill my mind,
as I compose this song for the king;
my tongue is like the pen of a good writer.

2 You are the most handsome of all men;
you are an eloquent speaker;
God has always blessed you!
3 Buckle on your sword, mighty king;
you are powerful and majestic!

4 Ride on in majesty to victory,
for the defense of truth and justice![b]
Your strength will win you great victories!
5 Your arrows are sharp and pierce the hearts of your enemies;
nations fall down at your feet.

6 The throne that God has given you
will last forever and ever!
You rule over your kingdom with justice;
7 you love what is right and hate what is evil.
That is why God, your God, has chosen you,
and has poured out more happiness on you
than on anyone else.
8 The perfume of myrrh, aloes, and cassia is on your clothes;
musicians entertain you in ivory palaces.
9 Among the ladies of your court are daughters of kings,
and at the right of your throne stands the queen,
wearing ornaments of finest gold.

[b]and justice; *Hebrew* and meekness of justice.

10 Bride of the king, listen to what I say—
forget your people and your relatives.
11 Your beauty will make the king desire you;
he is your master, so you must obey him.
12 The people of Tyre will bring you gifts;
rich people will try to win your favor.

13 The princess is in the palace —how beautiful she is!
Her gown is made of gold thread.
14 In her colorful gown she is led to the king,
followed by her bridesmaids,
and they also are brought to him.
15 With joy and gladness they come
and enter the king's palace.

16 You, my king, will have many sons
to take the place of your ancestors,
and you will make them rulers over the whole earth.
17 My song will keep your fame alive forever,
and everyone will praise you for all time to come.

God Is with Us

46 God is our shelter and strength,
always ready to help in times of trouble.
2 So we will not be afraid, even if the earth is shaken
and mountains fall into the ocean depths;
3 even if the seas roar and rage,
and the hills are shaken by the violence.

4 There is a river that brings joy to the city of God,
to the sacred house of the Most High.

We will not be afraid

5 God lives in the city, and it will never be
destroyed;
at early dawn he will come to its help.
6 Nations are terrified, kingdoms are
shaken;
God roars out, and the earth dissolves.

7 The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge!

8 Come, see what the Lord has done!
See what amazing things he has done
on earth!
9 He stops wars all over the world;
he breaks bows, destroys spears,
and sets shields on fire!
10 He says, "Stop your fighting, and know
that I am God,
supreme among the nations, supreme
over the world!"

11 The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge!

Sing praise to God

The Supreme Ruler

47 Clap your hands for joy, all peoples!
Praise God with loud songs!
[2] The Lord, the Most High, is to be feared;
he is a great king, ruling over all the world.
[3] He gave us victory over the peoples;
he made us rule over the nations.
[4] He chose for us the land where we live,
the proud possession of his people,
whom he loves.

[5] God goes up to his throne!
There are shouts of joy and the blast of trumpets,
as the Lord goes up!
[6] Sing praise to God;
sing praise to our king!
[7] God is king over all the world;
praise him with songs!

[8] God sits on his sacred throne;
he rules over the nations.
[9] The rulers of the nations come together

with the people[c] of the God of Abraham.
The shields of all the warriors belong to God;
he rules over all!

Zion, the City of God

48 The Lord is great, and must be highly praised
in the city of our God, on his sacred mountain.
2 Zion, the mountain of God, is high and beautiful;
the city of the great king brings joy to all the world!
3 God has shown that there is safety with him
inside the fortresses of the city.

4 The kings gathered together
and came to attack Mount Zion.
5 When they saw it they were surprised;
they were afraid and ran away.
6 There they were seized with fear and anguish,
like a woman about to bear a child.

7 God destroys large ships with the east wind.
8 We have heard about what God has done,
and now we have seen it
in the city of our God, the Lord Almighty;
he will keep the city safe forever.

9 Inside your temple, God,
we think of your constant love.
10 You are praised by people everywhere,
and your fame extends over all the earth.

[c]with the people; *Hebrew* the people.

You rule with justice;
11 let the people of Zion be glad!
You give right judgments;
let there be joy in the cities of Judah!

12 Walk all around Mount Zion and count its
towers,
13 take notice of its walls, and examine its
fortresses,
so that you may tell the next generation
14 that this God is our God, forever and
ever;
he will lead us for all time to come.

The Foolishness of Trusting in Riches

49 Hear this, everyone!
Listen, all people everywhere,
2 great and small alike,
rich and poor together.
3 I will think sensible thoughts;
I will speak words of wisdom.
4 I will turn my attention to a riddle,
and explain its meaning as I play the
harp.

5 I am not afraid in times of danger,
when I am surrounded by evil enemies,
6 by men who trust in their riches,
who boast of their great wealth.
7 A man can never redeem himself;[d]
he cannot pay God the price for his life,
8 because the payment for a man's life is
too great.
What he can pay will never be enough
9 to keep him from the grave,
to let him live forever.

10 He sees that even wise men die,
as well as foolish and stupid men.

[d] *Some Hebrew manuscripts* himself; *other Hebrew manuscripts* his brother.

They all leave their riches to their descendants.
[11] Their graves[e] are their homes forever;
there they stay for all time,
even though they once had lands of their own.
[12] A man's greatness cannot keep him from death;
he will die like the animals.

[13] See what happens to those who trust in themselves,
the fate of those[f] who are satisfied with their wealth—
[14] they are doomed to die like sheep,
and death will be their shepherd.
The righteous will triumph over them in the morning
as their bodies decay in the land of the dead,
far from their homes![g]
[15] But God will save me;
he will take me from the power of death.

[16] Don't be afraid when a man becomes rich,
when his wealth grows even greater;
[17] he cannot take it with him when he dies;
his wealth will not go to the grave with him.
[18] Even if a man is satisfied with this life,
and is praised because he is successful,
[19] he will join all his ancestors in death,
where the darkness lasts forever.
[20] A man's greatness cannot keep him from death;
he will die like the animals.

[e] *Some ancient translations* graves; *Hebrew* inner thoughts. [f] *One ancient translation* the fate of those; *Hebrew* after them. [g] *Hebrew unclear.*

True Worship

50 The Almighty God, the Lord, speaks;
he calls to the whole earth, from east to west.
2 God shines from Zion,
the city perfect in its beauty.

3 Our God is coming, but not in silence;
a raging fire is in front of him,
a furious storm around him.
4 He calls heaven and earth as witnesses
to see him judge his people.
5 He says, "Gather my faithful people to me,
those who made a covenant with me by offering a sacrifice."
6 The heavens proclaim that God is righteous,
that he himself is judge!

7 "Listen, my people, and I will speak:
I will testify against you, Israel.
I am God, your God.
8 I do not reprimand you because of your sacrifices
and the burnt offerings you always bring me.
9 And yet, I do not need bulls from your farms,
or goats from your flocks,
10 because the animals of the woods are mine
and the cattle on thousands of hills.
11 All the wild birds are mine
and all living things in the fields.

12 "If I were hungry I would not tell you,
because the world and everything in it is mine.
13 Do I eat the flesh of bulls,
or drink the blood of goats?

The animals of the woods are mine

14 Let the giving of thanks be your sacrifice to God,
and give the Almighty all the offerings that you promised.
15 Call to me when trouble comes;
I will save you,
and you will praise me."

16 But God says to the wicked,
"Why should you recite my commandments?
Why should you talk about my covenant?
17 You refuse to let me correct you;
you reject my commands.
18 When you see a thief, you become his friend,
and you associate with adulterers.

19 "You are always ready to speak evil;
you never hesitate to tell lies.
20 You are ready to accuse your own brothers,
and to find fault with them.
21 You have done all this, and I have said nothing,
so you thought that I am like you.
But now I will reprimand you,
and make the matter plain to you.

22 "Listen to this, you that ignore me,
or I will destroy you;
and there will be no one to save you.
23 Giving thanks is the sacrifice that honors me,
and I will surely save all who obey me."

A Prayer for Forgiveness[h]

51 Be merciful to me, God,
because of your constant love;

[h] *Hebrew title:* David wrote this psalm after the prophet Nathan had spoken to him about his adultery with Bathsheba.

wipe away my sins,
because of your great mercy!
2 Wash away my evil,
and make me clean from my sin!

3 I recognize my faults;
I am always conscious of my sins.
4 I have sinned against you—only against you,
and done what you consider evil.
So you are right in judging me;
you are justified in condemning me.
5 I have been evil from the time I was born;
from the day of my birth I have been sinful.

6 A faithful heart is what you want;
fill my mind with your wisdom.
7 Remove my sin, and I will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
8 Let me hear the sounds of joy and gladness;
and though you have crushed and broken me,
I will be happy once again.
9 Close your eyes to my sins,
and wipe out all my evil.

10 Create a pure heart in me, God,
and put a new and loyal spirit in me.
11 Do not banish me from your presence;
do not take your holy spirit away from me.
12 Give me again the joy that comes from your salvation,
and make my spirit obedient.
13 Then I will teach sinners your commands,
and they will turn back to you.

14 Spare my life, God my Savior,
and I will gladly proclaim your righteousness.

15 Help me to speak, Lord,
and I will praise you.

16 You do not want sacrifices,
or I would offer them;
you are not pleased with burnt offerings.
17 My sacrifice is a submissive spirit, God;
a submissive and obedient heart you
will not reject.

18 God, be kind to Zion and help her;
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
19 Then you will be pleased with the proper
sacrifices,
and with all burnt offerings;
and bulls will be sacrificed on your altar.

God's Judgment and Grace *i*

52 Why do you boast, great man, of
your evil?
God's love is constant.
2 You make plans to ruin others;
your tongue is like a sharp razor.
You are always inventing lies.
3 You love evil more than good
and falsehood more than the truth.
4 You love to hurt people with your words,
you liar!

5 So God will ruin you forever;
he will take hold of you and pull you out
of your tent;
he will remove you from the land of the
living.

Hebrew title: David wrote this poem when Doeg, the Edomite, went to Saul and told him that David had gone to the house of Abimelech.

6 Righteous people will see this and be
afraid;
they will laugh at you, and say,
7 "Look, here is a man who did not depend
on God for safety,
but instead trusted in his great wealth,
and looked for security in being
wicked!"

8 But I am like an olive tree growing near
the house of God;
I trust in his constant love forever and
ever.
9 I will always thank you, God, for what
you have done;
in the company of your people
I will proclaim that you are good.

The Wickedness of Men

(Psalm 14)

53 Fools say to themselves,
"God doesn't matter."
They are all corrupt,
they have done terrible things;
there is no one who does what is right.

2 God looks down at men from heaven
to see if there are any who are wise,
any who worship him.
3 But they have all turned away,
they are all equally bad;
not one of them does what is right,
not a single one.

4 "Don't they know?" God asks.
"Are these evildoers ignorant?
They live by robbing my people
and do not pray to me."

5 But then they will become terrified,
as they have never been before;
because God scatters the bones of your enemies.
He will defeat them completely,
because he has rejected them.

6 How I pray that salvation
will come to Israel from Zion!
When God makes his people prosperous again,
Jacob's descendants will be happy;
the people of Israel will be glad.

A Prayer for Protection from Enemies*i*

54 Save me by your power, God;
set me free by your might!
2 Hear my prayer, God;
listen to my words!

3 Proud men are coming to attack me;
cruel men are trying to kill me—
men who do not care about God.

4 I know that God is my helper,
that the Lord is my defender!
5 May God punish my enemies with their own evil!
He will destroy them because he is faithful.

6 Lord, I will gladly offer you a sacrifice;
I will give you thanks,
because you are good.
7 You have rescued me from all my troubles,
and I have seen my enemies defeated.

i *Hebrew title:* David wrote this poem when the men of Ziph went to Saul and told him that David was hiding in their territory.

A Prayer for Help

55 Hear my prayer, God;
don't turn away from my plea!
2 Listen to me and answer me;
I am worn out by my worries.
3 I am upset by the threats of my enemies,
by oppression from the wicked.
They bring trouble on me;
they are angry with me and hate me.

4 Fear fills my heart,
and the terrors of death are heavy on me.
5 I am gripped by fear and trembling;
I am overcome with horror.
6 I say, "I wish I had wings, like a dove!
I would fly away and find rest!
7 I would fly far away
and make my home in the desert.
8 I would hurry and find myself a shelter
from the raging wind and the storm."

I wish I had wings, like a dove!

9 Destroy them, Lord, and confuse their speech,

because I see violence and riots in the
city.
10 Day and night they walk around the city
on its walls;
it is full of crime and trouble.
11 There is destruction everywhere;
the streets are filled with oppression
and fraud.

12 If it were an enemy making fun of me,
I could endure it;
if it were an opponent boasting over me,
I could hide myself from him.
13 But it is you, my companion,
my colleague and close friend!
14 We had intimate talks with each other,
and went with the crowd to the temple.
15 May death come suddenly upon my ene-
mies;
may they go down alive into the land of
the dead!
Evil is in their homes and in their hearts.

16 But I call to the Lord God for help,
and he will save me.
17 My complaints and groans
go up to him morning, noon, and night,
and he will hear my voice.
18 He will bring me safely back
from the battles that I fight
against so many enemies.
19 God, who has ruled from eternity,
will hear me and defeat them;
there is nothing they can do about it,
because they do not fear him.

20 My former companion attacked his
friends;
he broke his promise.
21 His words were smoother than cream,
but there was hatred in his heart;
his words were as soothing as oil,
but they cut like sharp swords.

22 Leave your troubles with the Lord,
and he will support you;
he will never let a good man be defeated.

23 But you, God, will throw those murderers
and liars into the depths below,
before half their life is over.
As for me, I will trust in you.

A Prayer of Trust in God [k]

56 Be merciful to me, God,
because I am being attacked;
my enemies persecute me all the time!
2 All day long my opponents attack me.
There are so many who fight against me.
3 When I am afraid, O Most High,
I put my trust in you.
4 I trust in God and praise his promise;
in him I trust, and I will not be afraid.
What can mere man do to me?

5 My enemies make trouble for me in everything I do;
they are always thinking about how to hurt me!
6 They gather in a hiding place
and watch everything I do,
hoping to kill me.
7 Punish them, God, for their evil;
defeat these people in your anger!

8 You know how troubled I am;
you have kept a record of my tears.
Aren't they listed in your book?
9 The day I call to you,

[k] *Hebrew title*: This prayer was written by David after the Philistines captured him in Gath. [l] Punish; *Hebrew* Save.

my enemies will be turned back.
This I know—God is on my side!
10 I trust in God and praise his promise;
I will praise the promise of the Lord.
11 In him I trust, and I will not be afraid.
What can mere man do to me?

12 God, I will offer you what I have promised;
I will give you my offering of praise,
13 because you have rescued me from death
and kept me from defeat.
And so I walk in the presence of God,
in the light that shines on the living.

A Prayer for Help [m]

57 Be merciful to me, God, be merciful,
because I come to you for safety.
In the shadow of your wings I find protection,
until all danger is past.
2 I call to God, the Most High,
to God, who supplies all my needs.
3 He will answer from heaven and save me;
he will defeat my attackers.
God will show me his constant love and faithfulness.

4 I lie down among lions,
who are ready to devour men.
Their teeth are like spears and arrows;
their tongues are like sharp swords.

5 God, show your greatness in the sky,
and your glory over all the earth!

6 My enemies have spread a net to catch me;
I am overcome with distress.

[m] *Hebrew title:* David wrote this psalm after he ran away from Saul in the cave.

They dug a pit in my path,
but fell into it themselves.

7 I am ready, God;
I am completely ready!
I will sing and praise you!
8 Wake up, my soul!
Wake up, my harp and lyre!
I will wake up the sun!
9 I will thank you among the nations, Lord!
I will praise you among the peoples!
10 Your constant love reaches up to heaven,
your faithfulness to the skies.
11 God, show your greatness in the sky,
and your glory over all the earth!

A Prayer for God to Punish the Wicked

58 Do you really give a just decision,
you rulers?[n]
Do you judge all men fairly?
2 No! You think only of the evil you will do,
and commit crimes of violence in the land.

3 Evil men go wrong all their lives;
they tell lies from the day they are born.
4 They are full of poison, like snakes;
they stop up their ears, like a deaf cobra,
5 which does not hear the voice of the snake charmer,
or the chant of the clever magician.

6 Break their teeth, God;
tear out the fangs of these fierce lions, Lord!
7 May they disappear like water draining away;

[n] *Hebrew unclear.*

may they be crushed like weeds on the path.*o*
8 May they be like snails that dissolve into slime;
may they be like a baby born dead that never sees the light.
9 Before they know it, they are cut down like a bush;
in his fierce anger God will blow them away
while they are still living.*p*

10 The righteous will be glad when they see sinners punished;
they will wade through the blood of the wicked.
11 Men will say, "The righteous are indeed rewarded;
there is indeed a God who judges the world!"

A Prayer for Safety*q*

59 Save me from my enemies, my God;
protect me from those who attack me!
2 Save me from those evil men;
rescue me from those murderers!

3 Look! They are waiting to attack me;
cruel men are gathering against me.
It is not because of any sin or wrong I have done,
4 not because of any fault of mine, Lord,
that they hurry to their places.

5 Rise, Lord God Almighty, and come to my help;
see for yourself, God of Israel!

o Hebrew unclear. *p Verse 9 in Hebrew is unclear.* *q Hebrew title:* David wrote this psalm when Saul sent men to watch his house in order to kill him.

Wake up and punish the nations;
show no mercy to those evil traitors!

6 They come back in the evening,
snarling like dogs as they go about the city.
7 Listen to what they say!
Their tongues are like swords in their mouths,
yet they ask, "Who will hear us?"

8 But you laugh at them, Lord;
you make fun of all the nations!
9 My defender, I am protected by you;
God, you are my refuge.
10 My God, who loves me, will come to me;
he will let me see my enemies defeated.

11 Do not kill them, God, so that my people will not forget.
Scatter them by your strength and destroy them,
Lord, our protector!
12 Sin is on their lips; all their words are sinful;
may they be caught in their pride!
Because they curse and lie,
13 destroy them in your anger;
destroy them completely.
Then all people will know that God rules in Israel,
that his rule extends over all the earth!

14 My enemies come back in the evening,
snarling like dogs as they go about the city.
15 They roam around looking for food
and complain if they do not get enough.

16 But I will sing about your strength;
every morning I will sing aloud of your constant love.

You have been a refuge for me,
a shelter in my days of trouble.
17 I will praise you, my defender;
my refuge is God,
the God who loves me.

A Prayer for Deliverance[r]

60 You have rejected us, God, and defeated us;
you have been angry with us —but now turn back to us!
2 You have made the land tremble, and you have cut it open;
now heal its wounds because it is about to fall apart!
3 You have made your people suffer much trouble;
you have given us wine that made us drunk.
4 You raised a banner for those who fear you,
but they turned and ran from the enemy.
5 Save us by your might; answer our prayer,
so that the people you love may be rescued.

6 In his sanctuary God has said,
"In triumph I will divide Shechem,
and distribute Succoth Valley to my people.
7 Gilead is mine, and Manasseh too;
Ephraim is my helmet,
and Judah my royal scepter.
8 But I will use Moab as my washbowl
and Edom as my sandal box.
Did Philistia think she would shout in triumph over me?"

[r] *Hebrew title:* A psalm of David, for teaching, written when he was fighting against the Arameans from Naharaim and from Zobah, and Joab turned back and killed 12,000 Edomites in the Salt Valley.

9 Who will take me, God, into the fortified
city?
Who will bring me to Edom?
10 Have you really rejected us?
Aren't you going to march out with our
armies?
11 Help us fight the enemy,
because human help is worthless!
12 With God on our side we will win;
he will defeat our enemies.

Take me to a safe refuge

A Prayer for Protection

61 Hear my cry, God;
listen to my prayer!
2 In my despair, far from home,
I call to you!

Take me to a safe refuge,
3 because you are my protector,
my strong defender against my ene-
mies.

4 Let me live in your tent all my life;
let me find safety under your wings.
5 You have heard my promises, God,
and you have given me what belongs to
those who honor you.

6 Add many years to the king's life;
let him live on and on!
7 May he rule forever in your presence,
God;
protect him with your constant love
and faithfulness.

8 So I will always sing praises to you,
as I offer you daily what I have promised.

Confidence in God's Protection

62 I depend on God alone;
my salvation comes from him.
2 He alone is my protector and Savior;
he is my defender,
and I shall never be defeated.

3 How much longer will all of you attack a
man to defeat him,
like a falling wall,
like a broken-down fence?
4 You only want to bring him down from his
place of honor;
you take pleasure in lies.
You speak words of blessing,
but in your heart you curse him.

5 I depend on God alone;
I put my hope in him.
6 He alone is my protector and Savior;
he is my defender,
and I shall never be defeated.
7 My salvation and honor depend on God;
he is my strong protector;
he is my shelter.

[8] My people, trust in God at all times!
Tell him all your troubles,
because he is our refuge.

[9] Men are like a puff of breath;
mortal men are worthless.
Put them on the scales and they weigh
nothing;
they are lighter than a mere breath.
[10] Don't put your trust in violence;
don't hope to gain anything by robbery;
even if your riches increase,
don't depend on them.

[11] More than once I have heard God say
that power belongs to him,
[12] and that his love is constant.

You yourself, Lord, reward every man
according to his deeds.

Longing for God[s]

63 God, you are my God,
and I long for you.
My whole being desires you;
my soul is thirsty for you,
like a dry, worn-out, and waterless land.
[2] Let me see you in the sanctuary;
let me see how mighty and glorious you
are.
[3] Your constant love is better than life
itself,
and so I will praise you.
[4] I will give thanks to you as long as I live;
I will raise my hands to you in prayer.
[5] My soul will feast, and be satisfied
and I will sing glad songs of praise to
you.

[s] *Hebrew title:* David wrote this psalm when he was in the desert of Judea.

6 As I lie in bed I remember you;
all night long I think of you,
7 because you have always been my help.
In the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.
8 I cling to you,
and your hand keeps me safe.

9 Those who are trying to kill me
will go down into the land of the dead;
10 they will be killed in battle,
and their bodies eaten by wolves.
11 The king will rejoice because of God;
all who make promises in God's name will be glad,
but the mouths of liars will be shut.

A Prayer for Protection

64 I am in trouble, God—listen to my prayer!
I am afraid—save me from my enemies!
2 Protect me from the plots of the wicked,
from mobs of evil men.
3 They sharpen their tongues like swords,
and aim cruel words like arrows.
4 From ambush they shoot their arrows at good men;
they shoot suddenly, and are not afraid.
5 They encourage each other in their evil plots;
they talk about where they will place their traps.
"No one must see them," they say.
6 They make evil plans, and say,
"We have planned a perfect crime."
The heart and mind of man are a mystery!

7 But God shoots his arrows at them,
and suddenly they are wounded.

[8] He will destroy them because of their words;[t]
all who see them will shake their heads.
[9] They will all be afraid;
they will tell what God has done
and think about their acts.
[10] All righteous people will rejoice because of what the Lord has done;
they will find safety in him;
all good people will praise him.

Praise and Thanksgiving

65 God, people must praise you in Zion
and give you what they have promised,
[2] because you answer prayers.
All men shall come to you
[3] on account of their sins.
Our faults defeat us,[u]
but you forgive them.
[4] Happy are those whom you choose,
whom you bring to live in your sanctuary!
We shall be satisfied with the good things of your house,
the blessings of your sacred temple!

[5] You answer us, God our Savior,
and you save us by doing wonderful things.
People all over the world,
and across the distant seas, trust in you.
[6] You set the mountains in place by your strength,
showing your mighty power.
[7] You calm the roar of the seas
and the noise of the waves;

[t]He will destroy them because of their words; *Hebrew* They will destroy him, their words are against them. [u]*One ancient translation* us; *Hebrew* me.

you calm the uproar of the peoples.
8 The whole world is afraid,
because of the great things that you have done.
Your actions bring shouts of joy
from one end of the earth to the other.

9 You show your care for the land by sending rain;
you make it rich and fertile.
The streams you have given never run dry;
they provide the earth with crops -
this is what you have done.
10 You send abundant rain on the plowed fields
and soak them with water;
you soften the soil with showers
and cause the young plants to grow.
11 What a rich harvest your goodness provides!
Wherever you go there is plenty!
12 The pastures are filled with flocks;
the hillsides are full of joy.
13 The fields are covered with sheep;
the valleys are full of wheat;
they shout and sing for joy!

A Song of Praise and Thanksgiving

66 Praise God with shouts of joy, all people!
2 Sing to the glory of his name;
offer him glorious praise!
3 Say to God, "How wonderful are the things you do!
Your power is so great
that your enemies bow in fear before you.
4 Everyone on earth worships you;
they sing praises to you,
they sing praises to your name."

Sing to the glory of his name

5 Come and see what God has done,
his wonderful acts among men.
6 He changed the sea into dry land;
our ancestors crossed the river on foot.
There we rejoiced because of what he had done.
7 He rules forever by his might
and keeps his eyes on the nations.
Let no rebels rise against him!

8 Praise our God, all nations;
let your praise be heard.
9 He has kept us alive
and has not allowed us to fall.
10 You have put us to the test, God;
as silver is purified by fire,
so you have tested us.
11 You let us fall into a trap
and placed heavy burdens on our backs.
12 You let our enemies trample us;
we went through fire and flood,
but now you have brought us to a place of safety.[r]

13 I will bring burnt offerings to your house;
I will offer you what I promised.

[r] *Some ancient translations* safety; *Hebrew* overflowing.

14 I will give you what I said I would,
when I was in trouble.
15 I will offer sheep to be burned on the altar;
there will be the aroma of burning goats;
I will sacrifice bulls and goats.

16 Come and listen, all who honor God,
and I will tell you what he has done for me.
17 I cried to him for help;
I was ready to praise him with songs.
18 If I had ignored my sins,
the Lord would not have listened to me.
19 But God has indeed heard me;
he has listened to my prayer.

20 I praise God,
because he did not reject my prayer,
or keep back his constant love from me.

A Song of Thanksgiving

67 God, be merciful to us and bless us;
look on us with kindness,
2 that the whole world may know your will;
that all nations may know your salvation.

3 May the peoples praise you, God;
may all peoples praise you!

4 May the nations be glad and sing for joy,
because you judge the peoples with justice
and guide all the nations.

5 May the peoples praise you, God;
may all peoples praise you!

6 The land has produced its harvest;

God, our God, has blessed us.
7 God has blessed us;
may all people everywhere honor him.

A National Song of Triumph

68 May God rise up and scatter his enemies!
May those who hate him run away from him!
2 As smoke is blown away, so he will drive them off;
as wax melts in front of the fire,
so will the wicked perish in God's presence.
3 But the righteous will be glad and rejoice in his presence;
they will be exceedingly happy.

4 Sing to God, sing praise to his name;
prepare a way for him who rides on the clouds.
His name is the Lord—be glad in his presence!

5 God, who lives in his sacred temple,
cares for orphans and protects widows.
6 He gives the lonely a home to live in
and leads prisoners out into happy freedom;
but rebels will live in a desolate land.

7 God, when you led your people,
when you marched across the desert,
8 the earth shook, and the sky poured down rain,
because of the coming of the God of Sinai,
the coming of the God of Israel.
9 You caused abundant rain to fall,
and restored your worn-out land;
10 your people made their home there;

in your goodness you provided for the poor.

[11] The Lord gave the command,
and many women carried the news:
[12] "Kings and their armies are running away!"
The women at home divided what was captured;
[13] they looked like doves covered with silver,
whose wings glitter with fine gold.
(Why did some of you stay in the sheep pens?)
[14] When Almighty God scattered the kings on Mount Zalmon,
he caused snow to fall there.

[15] What a mighty mountain is Bashan,
a mountain of many peaks!
[16] Why do you, from your mighty peaks, look with scorn
on the mountain that God chose to live on?
The Lord will live there forever!

[17] With his many thousands of mighty chariots,
the Lord comes from Sinai[a] into the holy place.
[18] He goes up to the heights,
taking many captives with him;
he receives gifts from rebellious men.
The Lord God will live there.

[19] Praise the Lord,
who carries our burdens day after day;
he is the God who saves us.
[20] Our God is a God who saves;
he is the Lord, our Lord,
who rescues us from death.

[a] comes from Sinai; *Hebrew* in them, Sinai.

21 God will surely break the heads of his enemies,
of those who persist in their sinful ways.
22 The Lord has said, "I will bring your enemies back from Bashan;
I will bring them back from the depths of the ocean,
23 that you may wade[x] in their blood,
and your dogs may lap up as much as they want."

24 God, your march of triumph is seen by all,
the procession of God, my king, into his sanctuary.
25 The singers are in front, the musicians are behind,
in between are the girls beating the tambourines.
26 "Praise God in the meeting of his people;
praise the Lord, all the descendants of Israel!"
27 First comes Benjamin, the smallest tribe,
then the leaders of Judah with their group,
followed by the leaders of Zebulun and Naphtali.

28 Show your power, God,
the power you have used on our behalf.
29 From your temple in Jerusalem,
where kings bring gifts to you,
30 reprimand Egypt, that wild animal in the reeds;
reprimand the nations, that herd of bulls with their calves,
until they all bow down and offer you their silver.[y]
Scatter those people who love to make war!

[x] *Some ancient translations* wade; *Hebrew* break. [y] *The Hebrew text is unclear.*

31 Ambassadors[z] will come from Egypt;
the Ethiopians will raise their hands in
prayer to God.

32 Sing to God, kingdoms of the world,
sing praise to the Lord,
33 to him who rides in the sky,
the ancient sky!
Listen to him shout with a mighty roar!
34 Proclaim God's power;
his majesty is over Israel,
his might is in the skies.
35 How wonderful is God in[a] his sanctu-
ary,
the God of Israel!
He gives strength and power to his people.

Praise God!

A Cry for Help

69 Save me, God!
The water is up to my neck;
2 I am sinking in deep mud,
and there is no solid ground;
I am out in deep water,
and the waves are about to drown me.
3 I am worn out from calling for help,
and my throat is aching;
my eyes are strained
from looking for your help.

4 Those who hate me for no reason
are more numerous than the hairs on
my head;
those who lie about why they are my
enemies
are strong and want to kill me.
They made me give up things I did not
steal.

[z] *Some ancient translations* Ambassadors; *Hebrew unclear.* [a] *One ancient translation* in; *Hebrew* from.

5 My sins, God, are not hidden from you;
you know how foolish I have been!
6 Don't let me bring shame to those who
trust in you,
Lord God Almighty!
Don't let me bring disgrace to those who
worship you,
God of Israel!
7 It is for your sake that I have been in-
sulted,
and that I am covered with shame.
8 I am like a stranger to my brothers,
like a foreigner to my family.

9 My devotion for your temple burns in me
like a fire;
the insults which are hurled at you fall
on me.
10 I humble myself[b] by fasting,
and people insult me;
11 I dress myself in clothes of mourning,
and they make fun of me.
12 They talk about me in the streets,
and drunkards make songs about me.

13 But as for me, I will pray to you, Lord;
answer me, God, at a time you choose,
because of your great love,
because you keep your promise to save.
14 Save me from sinking in the mud;
keep me safe from my enemies,
and from the deep water.
15 Don't let the flood come over me;
don't let me drown in the depths,
or sink into the grave.

16 Answer me, Lord, in the goodness of your
constant love;
in your great compassion, turn to me!
17 Don't hide yourself from your servant;
I am in great trouble—answer me now!

[b] *Some ancient translations* humble myself; *Hebrew* cry.

18 Come to me and save me;
rescue me from my enemies.

19 You know how I am insulted,
how I am disgraced and dishonored;
you see all my enemies.
20 Insults have broken my heart,
and I am helpless.
I had hoped for sympathy, but there was none;
for comfort, but I found none.
21 When I was hungry, they gave me poison;
when I was thirsty, they offered me vinegar.

22 May their feasts cause their ruin;
may their celebrations[c] cause their downfall!
23 Blind them so they cannot see;
make their backs always weak!
24 Pour out your anger on them;
let your indignation overtake them!
25 May their camps be left deserted;
may no one be left alive in their tents!
26 They persecute those whom you have punished;
they talk about the sufferings of those you have wounded.
27 Keep a record of all their sins;
don't let them have any part in your salvation.
28 May their names be erased from the book of the living;
may they not be included in the list of your people.

29 But I am needy and in pain;
lift me up, God, and save me!

30 I will praise God with a song;

[c] *One ancient translation* their celebrations; *Hebrew* those who are at peace.

I will proclaim his greatness by giving
him thanks.
31 This will please the Lord more than offer-
ing him an ox,
more than giving him a full-grown bull.
32 When the needy see this they will be glad;
those who worship God will be en-
couraged.
33 The Lord listens to those in need,
and does not forget his people in prison.

34 Praise God, heaven and earth,
the seas and all creatures in them!
35 He will save Zion,
and rebuild the towns of Judah;
his people will live there and possess the
land;
36 the descendants of his servants will in-
herit it,
and those who love him will live there.

A Prayer for Help

(Psalm 40.13-17)

70 Save me, God!
Lord, help me now!
2 May those who try to kill me
be defeated and confused!
May those who are happy because of my
troubles
be turned back and disgraced!
3 May those who make fun of me
be dismayed by their defeat!

4 May all who come to you
be glad and joyful!
May all who love your salvation
always say, "How great God is!"

5 I am weak and helpless;
come quickly to me, God.

You are my helper and Savior—
do not delay, Lord!

An Old Man's Prayer

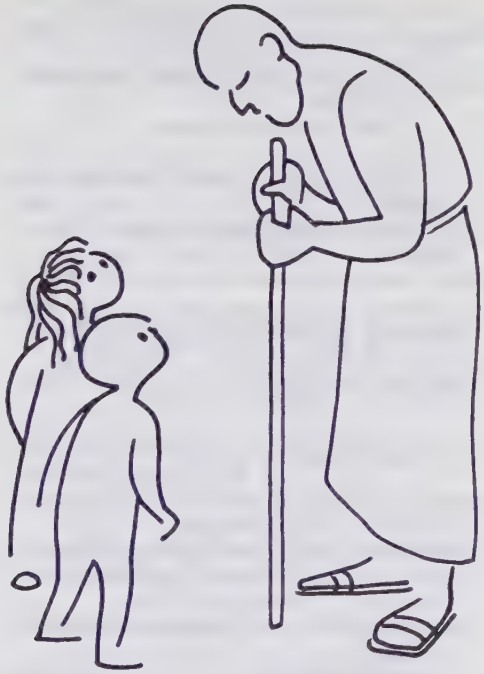
71 Lord, I am safe with you;
never let me be defeated!
2 Because you are righteous, help me and
rescue me.
Listen to me and save me!
3 Be my secure shelter,
and a strong fortress[a] to protect me;
you are my refuge and defense.

4 My God, rescue me from wicked men,
from the power of cruel and evil men.
5 Lord, I put my hope in you;
I have trusted in you since I was young.
6 I have relied on you all my life;
you have protected[b] me since I was
born;
I will always praise you!

7 My life has been a mystery to many,
but you are my strong defender.
8 All day long I praise you
and proclaim your glory.
9 Do not reject me now that I am old;
do not abandon me now that I am fee-
ble!
10 My enemies want to kill me;
they talk and plot against me.
11 They say, "God has abandoned him;
let us go after him and catch him,
because there is no one to rescue him!"

12 Don't stay so far away, God;
my God, help me now!
13 May those who attack me
be defeated and destroyed!

[a] *One ancient translation* a strong fortress; *Hebrew* to go always you commanded. [b] *Some ancient translations* protected; *Hebrew unclear*



I am old and my hair is gray

May those who try to hurt me
be shamed and disgraced!
14 I will always put my hope in you;
I will praise you more and more.
15 I will tell of your righteousness;
all day long I will speak of your salvation,
though it is more than I can understand.
16 I will praise your power, Lord God;
I will proclaim your righteousness,
yours alone.

17 You have taught me ever since I was
young,

and I still tell of your wonderful acts.
18 Now that I am old and my hair is gray,
do not abandon me, God!
Be with me while I proclaim your power
and might
to all generations to come.

19 Your righteousness, God, reaches the
skies.
You have done great things;
there is no one like you!
20 You have sent troubles and suffering on
me,
but you will restore my strength;
you will keep me from the grave.
21 You will make me greater than ever;
you will comfort me again.

22 I will indeed praise you with the harp:
I will praise your faithfulness, my God.
On my harp I will play hymns to you,
the Holy One of Israel.
23 I will shout for joy as I play for you;
with my whole being I will sing,
because you have saved me.
24 I will speak of your righteousness all day
long,
because those who tried to harm me
have been defeated and disgraced.

A Prayer for the King

72 Teach the king to judge with your
righteousness, God,
share with him your own justice,
2 so that he will rule over your people with
justice,
and govern the poor with righteousness.
3 May the land enjoy prosperity;
may it experience righteousness.
4 May the king judge the poor fairly;
may he help the needy

and defeat the oppressors!
[5] May your people worship you as long as the sun shines,
as long as the moon gives light, for all time.

[6] May the king be like rain on the fields,
like showers falling on the land.
[7] May righteousness flourish in his lifetime,
and prosperity last as long as the moon shines.

[8] His kingdom will reach from sea to sea,
from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth.
[9] The peoples of the desert will bow down before him;
his enemies will lie flat in the dust.
[10] The kings of Spain and of the islands will offer him gifts;
the kings of Arabia and Ethiopia will bring him offerings.
[11] All the kings will bow down before him;
all nations will serve him!

[12] He rescues the poor who call to him,
and those who are needy and neglected.
[13] He has pity on the weak and poor;
he saves the lives of those in need.
[14] He rescues them from oppression and violence;
their lives are precious to him.

[15] Long live the king!
May he be given gold from Arabia;
may prayers be said for him at all times;
may God's blessings be on him always!
[16] May there be plenty of grain in the land;
may the hills be covered with crops,
as fruitful as those of Lebanon.
May the cities be filled with people,
like grass growing in the fields.

17 May his name never be forgotten;
may his fame last as long as the sun.
May all nations praise him,
may all people ask God to bless them
as he has blessed the king.

18 Praise the Lord, the God of Israel,
who alone does these wonderful things!
19 Praise his glorious name forever,
and may his glory fill the whole earth!
Amen! Amen!

20 The end of the prayers of David, the son of Jesse.

BOOK THREE
(Psalms 73–89)

The Justice of God

73 God is indeed good to Israel,
to those who have pure hearts!
2 But I was about to fall down;
my feet were about to slip,
3 because I was jealous of the proud,
and I saw that the wicked are rich.

4 They do not suffer pain;
they are strong and healthy.
5 They don't suffer as other men do;
they don't have the troubles that others have.
6 And so they wear pride like a necklace,
and violence like a robe;
7 their hearts pour out evil,/
and their minds are filled with wicked schemes.
8 They make fun of others and speak of evil things;

/*Some ancient translations* their hearts pour out evil; *Hebrew unclear.*

they are proud and talk about oppressing others.
[9] They speak evil of God in heaven,
and give arrogant orders to men on earth,
[10] so that even God's people turn to them
and eagerly believe all they say.[g]
[11] They say, "God will not know;
the Most High will not find out!"
[12] This is what the wicked are like.
They have plenty and are always getting more.
[13] Is it for nothing, then, that I have kept myself pure,
and my hands clean from sin?
[14] God, you have made me suffer all day long;
every morning you have punished me!

[15] If I had said such things,
I would have been untrue to your people.
[16] So I tried hard to understand this,
even though it was so difficult,
[17] until I went into your temple
and understood what will happen to the wicked.

[18] Surely you put them in slippery places
and make them fall to destruction!
[19] They are instantly destroyed;
they go down to a horrible end!
[20] Lord, they are like a dream that goes away in the morning;
when you wake up you forget what they were like.

[21] When my thoughts were bitter,
and my feelings were hurt,
[22] I was stupid, and did not understand;
I acted like an animal toward you.

[g] *Hebrew unclear.*

23 Yet I am always with you,
and you hold me by the hand.
24 You guide me with your advice,
and at the end you will receive me with honor.
25 What else do I have in heaven but you?
since I have you, what else do I want on earth?
26 My mind and my body may grow weak,
but God is my strength;
he is all I ever want!

27 Surely those who abandon you will die,
and you will destroy those who are unfaithful to you.
28 But as for me, how wonderful to be near God!
In the Lord God I find protection,
to proclaim all that he has done.

A Prayer for National Deliverance

74 Why have you abandoned us like this, God?
Will you be angry with your own people forever?
2 Remember your people, whom you chose to be yours a long time ago,
the people you redeemed to be your own tribe.
Remember Mount Zion, where you have lived!
3 Come and walk over these total ruins;
our enemies have destroyed everything in the temple!

4 Your enemies shout in triumph in your meeting place;
they have taken over the temple.
5 They looked like woodsmen
cutting down trees with their axes.
6 They smashed all the wooden panels

with their axes and battering rams.
[7] They set your temple on fire;
they profaned the place where you are worshiped;
they wrecked it all.
[8] They decided to crush us completely;
they burned down every holy place in the land.

[9] All our sacred symbols are gone;
there are no prophets left,
and no one knows how long this will last.
[10] How long, God, will our enemies make fun of us?
Will they insult your name forever?
[11] Why have you refused to help us?
Why do you keep your hands behind you?[h]

[12] But God, you have been our king from the beginning;
you win victories on earth.
[13] With your mighty strength you divided the sea
and smashed the heads of the sea monsters;
[14] you crushed the heads of the monster Leviathan,
and gave the desert people his dead body to eat.
[15] You made springs and fountains flow;
you dried up large rivers.
[16] You created the day and the night;
you set the sun and the moon in their places;
[17] you set the limits of the earth;
you made summer and winter.

[18] But remember, Lord, that your enemies make fun of you;

[h] Why do you keep your hands behind you; *Hebrew unclear.*

that they are foolish and despise you.
19 Don't abandon your helpless people to
their cruel enemies;
don't forget your persecuted people!

20 Remember the covenant you made with
us.
There is violence in every dark corner
of the land!
21 Don't let the oppressed be defeated,
but let the poor and needy praise you.

22 Rise, God, and defend your cause!
Remember that the godless make fun of
you all day long!
23 Don't forget the angry shouts of your ene-
mies,
the continuous noise made by your
foes.

God the Judge

75 We praise you, God, we praise you!
We proclaim how great you are,
and tell the wonderful things you have
done!

2 "I have set a time for judgment," says
God,
"and I will judge with fairness.
3 Though the earth and all who live on it
disappear,
I will keep its foundations firm.
4 I tell the proud not to brag,
and the wicked not to be arrogant;
5 I tell them to quit showing off,
and to stop their bragging."

6 Judgment does not come from the east or
from the west,

[1] *Some ancient translations* We proclaim how great you are, and tell; *Hebrew* Your name is near and they tell.

from the north or from the south;[j]
7 it is God who does the judging,
putting some down and lifting others up.
8 The Lord holds a cup in his hand,
full of fresh wine, very strong;
he pours it out, and all the wicked drink it;
they drink it down to the last drop.

9 But I will never stop speaking of the God of Jacob,
or singing praises to him.
10 He will break the power of the wicked,
but the power of the righteous will be increased.

God the Victor

76 God is well known in Judah,
and famous in Israel.
2 He has his home in Jerusalem;
he lives on Mount Zion.
3 There he broke the arrows of the enemies,
their shields and swords, yes, all their weapons.

4 How glorious you are, God!
How majestic, as you return from the mountains
where you defeated your foes!
5 Their brave soldiers have been stripped of their loot,
and are now sleeping the sleep of death;
there is no one left to use their weapons.
6 When you threatened them, God of Jacob,
the horses and their riders fell dead.

7 But you—how men fear you!

[j]from the north or from the south; *Hebrew* from the mountains of the south.

Who can stand in your presence
when you are angry?
8 You made your judgment known from heaven;
the earth was afraid and lay still,
9 when you rose up to pronounce judgment,
to save all the oppressed on earth.

10 Men's anger only results in more praise for you;
those who survive the wars will keep your festivals.[k]
11 Give the Lord your God what you promised him;
all you nearby nations bring gifts to him.
God makes men fear him;
12 he humiliates proud princes,
and terrorizes great kings.

Comfort in Time of Distress

77 I cry aloud to God;
I cry aloud, and he hears me.
2 In time of trouble I pray to the Lord;
all night long I lift my hands in prayer,
but I cannot find comfort.
3 I think of God, and I sigh;
I meditate, and I feel discouraged.

4 He doesn't let me sleep;
I am so worried that I cannot speak.
5 I think of days gone by
and remember years of long ago.
6 I spend the night in deep thought;[l]
I meditate, and this is what I ask myself:

7 "Will the Lord always reject me?
Will he never again be pleased with me?

[k] *One ancient translation* will keep your festivals; *Hebrew unclear.*
[l] *Some ancient translations* deep thought; *Hebrew* song.

[8] Has he stopped loving me?
Is his promise no longer good?
[9] Has God forgotten to be merciful?
Has anger taken the place of his compassion?"
[10] Then I said, "What hurts me most is this—
that God is no longer powerful."

[11] I will remember your great acts, Lord;
I will recall the wonders you did in the past.
[12] I will think about all that you have done;
I will meditate on all your deeds.

[13] Everything you do, God, is holy!
No god is as great as you!
[14] You are the God who works miracles;
you showed your might among the nations.
[15] By your power you saved your people,
the descendants of Jacob and of Joseph.

[16] When the waters saw you, God, they were afraid,
and the depths of the sea trembled.
[17] The clouds poured down rain;
thunder crashed from the sky,
and lightning flashed in all directions.
[18] The crash of your thunder rolled out,
and flashes of lightning lit up the whole world;
the earth trembled and shook.
[19] You walked through the sea;
you crossed the deep ocean,
but your footprints could not be seen.
[20] You led your people like a shepherd,
with Moses and Aaron in charge of them.

God and His People

78 Listen, my people, to my teaching,
and pay attention to what I say.
2 I am going to speak to you,
and tell you mysteries from the past,
3 things we have heard and known,
that our ancestors have told us.
4 We will not keep them from our children,
but will tell the next generation
about the Lord's power and his mighty acts,
and the wonderful things that he has done.

5 He gave laws to the people of Israel,
and commandments to the descendants of Jacob.
He gave orders to our ancestors
to teach his laws to their children,
6 so that the next generation might learn them,
and in turn should tell their children.
7 In this way they also would put their trust in God,
and not forget what he had done,
but always obey his commandments.
8 They should not be like their ancestors,
a rebellious and disobedient people,
whose trust in God was never firm,
and who did not remain faithful to him.

9 The Ephraimites, who fought with bows and arrows,
ran away on the day of battle.
10 They did not keep their covenant with God;
they refused to obey his law.
11 They forgot what he had done,
the miracles that he had shown them.
12 While their ancestors watched, God performed a miracle

in the field of Zoan, in the land of
Egypt.
13 He divided the sea and led them through;
he made the waters stand like walls.
14 By day he led them with a cloud,
and all night long with the light of a fire.
15 He split rocks open in the desert,
and gave them water from the depths.
16 He caused a stream to come out of the
rock,
and made the water flow like a river.

17 But they continued to sin against God,
and rebelled in the desert against the
Most High.
18 They deliberately put God to the test,
by demanding the food they wanted.
19 They spoke against God, saying,
"Can God set a table in the desert?
20 It is true that he struck the rock,
and water flowed out in a torrent;
but can he also provide us with bread,
and give his people meat?"

21 And so the Lord was angry when he heard
them;
he attacked his people with fire,
and his anger against them grew,
22 because they had no faith in him,
and didn't believe that he would save
them.
23 But he spoke to the sky above,
and commanded its doors to open;
24 he gave them grain from heaven,
by sending down manna for them to
eat.
25 So they ate the food of angels.
God gave them all they could eat.
26 Then he caused the east wind to blow,
and by his power he stirred up the south
wind,
27 and sent down birds on them as thick as
dust,

as many as the grains of sand on the shore;
28 they fell in the middle of the camp,
all around the tents.
29 So the people ate and were satisfied;
God gave them all they wanted.
30 But while they were still eating,
even before they had satisfied themselves,
31 God became angry with them,
and killed the strongest men,
the best young men of Israel!

32 In spite of all his miracles the people kept on sinning,
and would not believe;
33 so he ended their days like a breath,
their lives with sudden disaster.
34 But when he would kill some of them,
the rest would turn to him;
they would repent and pray earnestly to him.
35 They remembered that God was their protector,
that the Most High was their Savior.
36 But their words were all lies,
and everything they said was flattery.
37 They were not loyal to him;
they were not faithful to their covenant with him.

38 But God was merciful to his people.
He forgave their sin
and did not destroy them.
Many times he kept from being angry
and restrained his fury.
39 He remembered that they were only men,
and like a wind that blows by and is gone.

40 How often they rebelled against him in the desert;

how many times they made him sad!
41 Again and again they put God to the test,
and made the Holy One of Israel angry.
42 They forgot his great power;
they forgot the time he saved them
from their enemies,
43 and performed his mighty acts and miracles
in the field of Zoan, in the land of
Egypt.
44 He turned the rivers into blood,
so that the Egyptians couldn't drink
from their streams.
45 He sent flies among them, that tormented
them,
and frogs, that ruined their fields.
46 He sent caterpillars to eat their crops,
and grasshoppers to destroy their fields.
47 He killed their grapevines with hail,
and their fig trees with frost.
48 He killed their cattle with hail,
and their flocks with lightning.
49 He blasted them with his furious anger
and fierce rage;
he caused them great distress
by sending the destroying angels.
50 He did not restrain his anger,
or spare their lives,
but killed them with a plague.
51 He killed the firstborn sons
of all the families in Egypt.

52 Then he led his people out like a shepherd;
he guided them through the desert.
53 He led them safely, and they were not
afraid;
but the sea covered their enemies.
54 He brought them to his holy land,
to the mountains which he himself conquered.
55 He drove out the inhabitants as his people
advanced;

he divided the land among the tribes of
Israel,
and there let them settle in their tents.

56 But they rebelled against Almighty God,
and put him to the test.
They did not obey his commandments,
57 but were rebellious and disloyal like
their ancestors,
unreliable as arrows shot from a
crooked bow.
58 They angered him with their heathen
places of worship,
and made him jealous with their idols.
59 God was angry when he saw it,
and so rejected his people completely.
60 He abandoned his tent in Shiloh,
the home where he had lived among
men.
61 He allowed the enemies to capture the
covenant box,
where his power and glory were seen.
62 He was angry with his own people,
and let them be killed by their enemies.
63 Young men were killed in war,
and young women had no one to marry.
64 Priests were killed by swords,
and their widows could not mourn for
them.

65 At last the Lord woke up as though from
sleep;
he was like a strong man excited by
wine.
66 He drove his enemies back,
in lasting and shameful defeat.
67 He rejected the descendants of Joseph;
he did not select the tribe of Ephraim.
68 Instead he chose the tribe of Judah,
and Mount Zion, which he dearly loves.
69 There he built his temple,
like his home in heaven;

he made it firm like the earth,
secure for all time.

70 He chose his servant David;
he took him from taking care of the sheep
71 and looking after the lambs.
He made him king of Israel,
the shepherd of the people of God.
72 David took care of them with complete devotion
and led them with skill.

A Prayer for the Nation's Deliverance

79 God, the heathen have invaded your people's land!
They have profaned your holy temple
and left Jerusalem in ruins.
2 They left the bodies of your people for birds to eat,
the bodies of your servants for wild animals.
3 They shed your people's blood like water;
blood flowed like water all over Jerusalem,
and no one was left to bury the corpses.
4 The nations around us make fun of us;
they laugh at us and mock us.

5 How long will you be angry with us, Lord? Forever?
Will your anger continue to burn like fire?
6 Be angry with the nations that do not worship you,
with the people who reject you!
7 They have killed our people
and ruined our country.

8 Do not punish us for the sins of our ancestors,

but have mercy on us now,
because we have lost all hope.
9 Help us, God our Savior,
for the sake of your own honor;
rescue us and forgive our sins,
so that people will praise you.
10 Why should the nations ask us,
"Where is your God?"
Let us see you punish the nations
for shedding the blood of your servants!

11 Listen to the groans of the prisoners,
and by your great power free those who
are condemned to die.
12 Lord, pay the other nations back seven
times,
for all the insults they have hurled at
you.
13 And we, your people the sheep of your
flock,
will thank you forever
and praise you for all time to come.

A Prayer for the Nation's Restoration

80 Listen to us, Shepherd of Israel;
hear us, leader of your flock.
Seated on your throne on the cherubim,
2 reveal your love for the tribes of
Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh!
Show us your strength;
come and save us!

3 Bring us back, God!
Show us your love, and we will be
saved!

4 How much longer, Lord God Almighty,
will you be angry with your people's
prayers?
5 You have given us tears to eat,
a large cup of tears to drink.

6 You let the neighboring nations fight over
our land,
and our enemies make fun of us.

7 Bring us back, Almighty God!
Show us your love, and we will be
saved!

8 You brought a grapevine out of Egypt;
you drove out other nations and
planted it in their land.
9 You cleared a place for it to grow;
its roots went deep, and it spread out
over the whole land.
10 It covered the hills with its shade,
the giant cedars with its branches.
11 It extended its branches to the Mediter-
ranean Sea,
and as far as the Euphrates River.
12 Why did you break down the fences
around it?
Now anyone passing by can steal its
grapes;
13 wild pigs trample it down,
and all the wild animals eat it.

14 Turn to us, Almighty God!
Look down from heaven at us;
come and save your grapevine!
15 Come and save this vine that you yourself
planted,
this young vine you made grow so
strong!

16 Our enemies have set it on fire and cut it
down;
look at them in anger and destroy them!
17 Protect and preserve the people you have
chosen,
the nation you made grow so strong!
18 We will never turn away from you again;
keep us alive, and we will praise you.

19 Bring us back, Lord God Almighty!
Show us your love, and we will be saved!

A Song for a Festival

81 Shout with joy to God our defender;
sing praises to the God of Jacob!
2 Start the music and play the tambourines;
play pleasant music on the harps and the lyres.
3 Blow the horn for the festival;
when the moon is new, and when the moon is full.
4 This is the law in Israel,
an order from the God of Jacob.
5 He commanded it to the people of Israel,
when he marched out against the land of Egypt.

I hear an unfamiliar voice saying,
6 "I took the heavy loads off your backs;
I let you put down your workbaskets.
7 When you were in trouble you called to me, and I saved you.
From my hiding place in the storm, I answered you;
I put you to the test at the springs of Meribah.

8 "Listen, my people, to my warning;
Israel, how I wish you would listen to me!
9 You must never serve a foreign god,
or worship anyone else but me.
10 I am the Lord, your God,
who brought you out of the land of Egypt.
Open your mouth, and I will feed you.

11 "But my people would not listen to me;

Israel would not obey me.
12 So I let them go their stubborn ways
and do whatever they wanted.
13 How I wish my people would listen to me;
how I wish they would obey me!
14 I would quickly defeat their enemies
and conquer all their foes.
15 Those who hate me would bow in fear
before me;
their punishment would last forever.
16 I would feed you with the finest wheat
and satisfy you with wild honey."

God the Supreme Ruler

82 God presides in the heavenly council;
in the meeting of the gods he gives his decision:
2 "You must stop judging unjustly,
and quit being partial to the wicked!
3 Defend the rights of the poor and the orphans;
be fair to the needy and the helpless.
4 Rescue the poor and the needy;
save them from the power of evil men!

5 "How ignorant you are, how stupid!
You live in darkness,
and justice has disappeared from the world.
6 I told you that you are gods,
that all of you are the sons of the Most High.
7 But you will die like men;
your life will end like any prince."

8 Come, God, and rule the world;
all the nations are yours.

A Prayer for the Defeat of Israel's Enemies

83 God, don't keep silent;
don't be still, God, don't be quiet!
2 Look! Your enemies are in revolt,
and those who hate you are rebelling.
3 They are making secret plans against your people;
they are plotting against those you protect.
4 "Come," they say, "let us destroy their nation,
so that Israel will be forgotten forever!"

5 They agree on their plan,
and form an alliance against you:
6 the people of Edom, and the Ishmaelites,
the people of Moab, and the Hagrites;
7 the people of Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek,
of Philistia and Tyre;
8 Assyria has also joined them,
as a strong ally of the descendants of Lot.

9 Do to them what you did to the Midianites,
and to Sisera and Jabin at the Kishon River,
10 who were defeated at Endor,
whose bodies rotted on the ground.
11 Do to their generals what you did to Oreb and Zeeb;
defeat all their rulers as you did Zebah and Zalmunna
12 who said, "We will take for our own
the land that belongs to God."

13 My God, scatter them like dust,
like straw blown away by the wind.
14 As the fire burns the forest,
as the flames set the hills on fire,

15 so chase them away with your storm
and terrify them with your fierce winds.
16 Cover their faces with shame, Lord,
so they will want to serve you.
17 May they be defeated and terrified
forever;
may they die in complete disgrace!
18 May they know that only you are the
Lord,
supreme ruler over all the earth!

Longing for God's House

84 How I love your temple, Almighty
God!
2 How I want to be there!
I long for the courts of the Lord's temple.
With my whole being I sing with joy to
the living God.
3 Even the sparrows have built a nest,
and the swallows have their own home;
they keep their young near your altars,
Lord Almighty, my king and my God.
4 How happy are those who live in your
temple,
always singing praise to you!

5 How happy are those whose strength
comes from you,
who are eager to make the pilgrimage to
Mount Zion.
6 As they pass through the dry valley
it becomes a place of springs;
the early rain fills it with pools.
7 They grow stronger as they go;
they will see the God of gods on Zion!

8 Hear my prayer, Lord God Almighty;
listen, God of Jacob!
9 Bless our king, God,
the king you have chosen!

10 One day spent in your temple
is better than a thousand anywhere else;
I would rather stand at the gate of the house of my God
than live in the homes of the wicked.
11 The Lord is our protector and glorious king,
blessing us with kindness and honor.
He does not refuse any good thing
to those who do what is right.
12 Happy are those who trust in you, Almighty God!

A Prayer for the Nation's Welfare

85 Lord, you have been kind to your land;
you made Israel prosperous again.
2 You have forgiven your people's sins
and pardoned all their wrongs.
3 You stopped being angry with them
and put away your furious rage.

4 Bring us back, God our Savior,
and stop being displeased with us!
5 Will you be angry with us forever?
Will your anger never cease?
6 Please renew our strength,
and we, your people, will praise you.
7 Show us your constant love, Lord,
and give us your saving help.

8 I am listening to what the Lord God is saying;
he promises peace to us, his own people,
if we do not go back to our foolish ways.
9 Surely he is ready to save those who honor him,
and his saving presence will remain in our land.

10 Love and faithfulness will come together;
righteousness and peace will meet.
11 Man's loyalty will reach up from the earth,
and God's righteousness will look down from heaven.
12 The Lord will make us prosperous,
and our land will produce rich harvests.
13 Righteousness will go before the Lord,
and prepare the path for him.

A Prayer for Help

86 Listen to me, Lord, and answer me,
because I am weak and helpless.
2 Save me from death, because I am loyal to you;
save me, because I am your servant and trust in you.

3 You are my God, so be merciful to me, Lord;
I pray to you all day long.
4 Make your servant glad, Lord,
because my prayers go up to you.
5 Lord, you are good and forgiving,
full of constant love for all who pray to you.

6 Listen, Lord, to my prayer;
hear my cries for help.
7 I call to you in times of trouble,
because you answer my prayer.

8 There is no other god like you, Lord,
not one who can do what you can do.
9 All the nations you have created
will come and bow down to you.
They will praise your greatness,
10 because only you, God, are mighty;
only you do wonderful things.

11 Teach me, Lord, what you want me to do,
and I will obey you faithfully;
teach me to serve you with complete devotion.
12 I will praise you with all my heart, Lord my God;
I will proclaim your greatness forever.
13 How great is your constant love for me!
You have saved me from the depths of the grave.
14 God, arrogant men are coming against me;
a gang of cruel men is trying to kill me,
people who pay no attention to you.
15 Lord, you are a merciful and loving God,
slow to anger, always kind and faithful.
16 Turn to me and have mercy on me;
strengthen me and save me,
because I serve you, just as my mother did.
17 Show me proof of your goodness, Lord;
then those who hate me will be ashamed,
when they see that you have given me comfort and help.

In Praise of Jerusalem

87 God built his city on the sacred hills;
2 he loves the city of Jerusalem
more than any other place in Israel.
3 Listen, city of God,
to the wonderful things he says about you:

4 "When I list the nations that obey me,
I will include Egypt and Babylonia;
and I will say of Philistia, Tyre, and Ethiopia,
that they also belong to Jerusalem."
5 Of Zion it will be said
that all nations belong there,

and the Most High will make her
strong.
6 The Lord will write a list of the peoples,
and include them all as citizens of Jerusalem.
7 All who live[m] there will sing and dance.

A Cry for Help

88 Lord God, my Savior, I cry out all
day,
and at night I come before you.
2 Hear my prayer;
listen to my cry for help!

3 So many troubles have fallen on me
that I am close to death.
4 I am like all others who are about to die;
all my strength is gone.
5 I am abandoned among the dead;
I am like the slain lying in their graves,
whom you have forgotten completely,
who are beyond your help.
6 You have thrown me into the depths of
the tomb,
into the darkest and deepest pit.
7 Your anger lies heavy on me,
and I am crushed beneath its waves.

8 You have caused my friends to abandon
me;
you have made me repulsive to them.
I am closed in and cannot escape;
9 my eyes are weak from suffering.
Lord, every day I call to you,
and lift my hands to you in prayer!

10 Do you perform miracles for the dead?
Do they rise up and praise you?
11 Is your constant love spoken of in the
grave,

[m] *Some ancient translations* who live; *Hebrew* their fountains.

or your faithfulness in the place of destruction?
12 Are your miracles seen in that place of darkness,
or your goodness in the land of doom?

13 Lord, I call to you for help;
every morning I pray to you.
14 Why do you reject me, Lord?
Why do you hide yourself from me?
15 Ever since I was young I have suffered and been near death;
I am worn out[n] from the burden of your punishments.
16 Your furious anger rolls over me;
your terrible attacks destroy me.
17 All day long they surround me like a flood;
they close in on me from all sides.
18 You have made even my closest friends abandon me;
darkness is the only companion I have left.

A Hymn in Time of National Trouble

89 Lord, I will always sing of your constant love;
at all times I will proclaim your faithfulness.
2 I know that your love will last forever,
that your faithfulness is as permanent as the sky.
3 You said, "I have made a covenant with the man I chose;
I have promised my servant David,
4 'A descendant of yours will always be king;
I will preserve your kingdom forever.'"

[n] *Hebrew unclear.*

5 The gods in heaven sing of the wonderful things you do;
they sing of your faithfulness, Lord.
6 No one in heaven is like you, Lord;
none of the gods is your equal.
7 You are respected in the council of the gods,
and greatly feared by all around you.

8 Lord God Almighty, none is as mighty as you;
in all things you are faithful, Lord.
9 You rule over the powerful sea;
you calm its angry waves.
10 You crushed the monster Rahab and killed it;
with your mighty strength you defeated your enemies.
11 The earth is yours, and heaven also;
you created the world and everything in it;
12 you made the north and the south;
Mount Tabor and Mount Hermon sing to you for joy.
13 How powerful you are!
How great is your strength!
14 Your kingdom is founded on righteousness and justice;
love and faithfulness are in all you do.

15 Happy are the people who worship you with songs,
who live in the light of your kindness.
16 Because of you they rejoice all day long
and praise you because of your goodness.
17 You give us great victories;
in your kindness you make us triumphant,
18 because you chose our protector;
you, the Holy One of Israel, gave us our king.

God's Promise to David

19 In a vision long ago you said to your faithful servants,
"I have put the crown[a] on a famous soldier;
I have given the throne to one chosen from the people.
20 I have selected my servant David
and made him your king.
21 My strength will always be with him,
my power will make him strong.
22 His enemies will never succeed against him,
the wicked will not defeat him.
23 I will crush his foes
and kill all who hate him.
24 I will always love him and be loyal to him;
I will make him always victorious.
25 I will extend his kingdom
from the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River.
26 He will say to me,
'You are my father and my God;
you are my protector and Savior.'
27 I will make him my firstborn son,
the greatest of all kings.
28 I will always keep my promise to him,
and my covenant with him will last forever.
29 A descendant of his will always be king;
his kingdom will be as permanent as the sky.

30 "But if his descendants disobey my law,
and do not live according to my rules;
31 if they disregard my instructions,
and do not keep my commandments,
32 then I will punish them for their sins;
I will whip them for their wrongs.
33 But I will not stop loving David,

[a]crown; *Hebrew* help.

or fail to keep my promise to him.
34 I will not break my covenant with him,
or take back even one promise I made
to him.

35 "Once and for all I have promised by my
holy name:
I will never lie to David!
36 He will always have descendants,
and I will watch over his kingdom as
long as the sun shines.
37 It will be as permanent as the moon,
as that faithful witness in the sky."

Lament over the Defeat of the King

38 But you are angry with your chosen king;
you have deserted and rejected him.
39 You have canceled your covenant with
your servant,
and thrown his crown in the dirt.
40 You have broken down the walls of his
city,
and left his forts in ruins.
41 All who pass by steal his belongings;
all his neighbors make fun of him.
42 You have given the victory to his enemies;
you have made them all happy.
43 You have made his weapons useless,
and let him be defeated in battle.
44 You have taken away his royal scepter,[p]
and knocked his throne to the ground,
45 You have made him old before his time,
and covered him with disgrace.

A Prayer for Deliverance

46 How long will you hide yourself, Lord?
Forever?
How long will your anger burn like fire?
47 Remember, Lord,[q] how short is man's life;

[p]royal scepter: *Hebrew* purity. [q]Lord; *Hebrew* me.

remember that you created all men
mortal!
48 Who can live and never die?
How can man keep himself from the
grave?

49 Lord, where are the former proofs of your
love?
Where are the promises you made to
David?
50 Don't forget how I, your servant, am in-
sulted;
how I endure all the insults[r] of the hea-
then.
51 How your enemies insult your chosen
king, Lord!
They insult him wherever he goes.

52 Let us praise the Lord forever!
Amen! Amen!

Book Four
(Psalms 90–106)

Of God and Man

90 Lord, you have always been our
home.
2 Before the hills were created,
before you brought the world into be-
ing,
you are eternally God, without begin-
ning or end.

3 You tell men to return to what they were:
you change them back to soil.
4 A thousand years to you are like one day;
they are like yesterday, already gone,

[r]insults: *Hebrew* crowds.

like a short hour in the night.
5 You carry men away like a flood;
they last no longer than a dream.
They are like weeds that sprout in the morning,
6 that grow and burst into bloom,
then dry up and die in the evening.

7 We are destroyed by your anger;
we are terrified by your fury.
8 You place our sins before you,
our secret sins where you can see them.

9 Our lifetime is cut short by your anger;
our life comes to an end like a whisper.
10 Seventy years is all we have—
eighty years, if we are strong;
yet all they bring us is worry and trouble;
life is soon over, and we are gone.

11 Who really knows the full power of your anger?
Who knows what fear your fury can bring?
12 Teach us how short our life is,
so that we may become wise.

13 How long, Lord, before you relent?
Have pity on your servants!
14 Fill us each morning with your constant love,
that we may sing and be glad all our life.
15 Give us now as much happiness as you gave us sadness,
during all those years when we had troubles.
16 Let us, your servants, see your mighty acts;
let our descendants see your glorious might.
17 Lord our God, may your blessings be with us,

and give us success in all we do!
Yes, give us success in all we do!

God Our Protector

91 Whoever goes to the Most High for safety,
whoever remains under the protection of the Almighty,
2 can say to the Lord,
"You are my defender and protector!
You are my God; in you I trust."

3 He will surely keep you safe from all hidden dangers,
and from all deadly diseases.
4 He will cover you with his wings;
you will be safe under his care;
his faithfulness will protect and defend you.
5 You will not be afraid of dangers at night,
or of sudden attacks during the day,
6 of the plagues that strike in the dark,
or of the evils that kill in daylight.

7 A thousand may fall beside you,
ten thousand all around you,
but you will not be harmed.
8 You will look and see
how the wicked are punished.

9 Because you made the Lord your defender,
the Most High your protector,
10 no disaster will strike you,
no violence will come near your home.
11 God will put his angels in charge of you,
to protect you wherever you go.
12 They will hold you up with their hands,
to keep you from hurting your feet on the rocks.

13 You will trample down lions and snakes,
fierce lions and poisonous snakes.

14 God says, "I will save those who love me,
and protect those who know me.
15 When they call to me, I will answer them;
when they are in trouble, I will be with
them.
I will rescue them and honor them.
16 I will reward them with long life,
and will surely save them."

A Song of Praise

92 How good it is to give thanks to the
Lord,
to sing in your honor, Most High God,
2 to proclaim your constant love every
morning,
and your faithfulness every night,
3 with the music of stringed instruments,
and with melody on the harp.
4 Your mighty acts, Lord, make me glad;
because of what you have done I sing
for joy.

5 How great are your acts, Lord!
How deep are your thoughts!
6 Here is something a fool cannot know,
a stupid man cannot understand:
7 the wicked may grow like weeds,
and all evildoers may prosper;
yet they will be totally destroyed,
8 because you, Lord, are supreme for-
ever.

9 We know that your enemies will die,
and all wicked men be defeated.
10 You have made me as strong as a wild
bull;
you have blessed me with happiness.

11 I have seen the defeat of my enemies,
and heard the cries of the wicked.

12 The righteous will flourish like palm trees;
they will grow like the cedars of Lebanon.
13 They are like trees planted in the house of the Lord,
that flourish in the temple of our God,
14 that still bear fruit in old age,
and are always green and strong.
15 This shows that the Lord is just;
in him, my defender, there is no wrong.

God the King

93 The Lord is king!
He is clothed with majesty,
and covered with strength.
Surely the earth is set firmly in place
and cannot be moved.
2 Your throne, Lord, has been firm from the beginning,
and you existed before time began.

3 The ocean depths raise their voice, Lord;
they raise their voice and roar.
4 The Lord rules supreme in heaven,
greater than the roar of the ocean,
more powerful than the waves of the sea.

5 Your laws are eternal, Lord,
and your temple is holy indeed,
forever and ever.

God the Judge of All

94 Lord, you are a God who punishes;
reveal[3] your anger!
2 You are the judge of all men;

[3] *Some ancient translations* reveal; *Hebrew* you revealed.

rise and give the proud what they deserve!
[3] How much longer will the wicked be glad?
How much longer, Lord?
[4] How much longer will evildoers be proud
and boast about their crimes?

[5] They crush your people, Lord;
they oppress those who belong to you.
[6] They kill widows and orphans,
and murder the strangers who live in our land.
[7] They say, "The Lord doesn't see us;
the God of Israel does not notice!"

[8] My people, how can you be such stupid fools?
When will you ever learn?
[9] God made our ears—can't he hear?
He made our eyes—can't he see?
[10] He is in charge of the nations—won't he punish them?
He is the teacher of all men—doesn't he know?
[11] The Lord knows what they think;
he knows how senseless their reasoning is.

[12] Lord, happy is the man whom you instruct,
the man to whom you teach your law,
[13] to give him rest from days of trouble,
until a grave is dug for the wicked.
[14] The Lord will not abandon his people;
he will not desert those who belong to him.
[15] Justice will again be found in courts of judgment,
and all righteous people will support it.

[16] Who stood up for me against the wicked?
Who took my side against the evildoers?

17 If the Lord had not helped me,
I would have gone quickly to the land
of silence.
18 I said, "I am falling";
but, Lord, your constant love held me
up.
19 When I am anxious and worried,
you comfort me and make me glad.

20 You have nothing to do with corrupt
judges,
who make injustice legal,
21 who plot against good men,
and sentence the innocent to death.
22 But the Lord defends me;
my God protects me.
23 He will punish them for their wickedness,
and destroy them for their sins;
the Lord our God will destroy them.

A Song of Praise

95 Come, let us praise the Lord!
Let us sing for joy to our protector
and Savior!
2 Let us come before him with thanksgiving,
and sing joyful songs of praise!
3 For the Lord is a mighty God,
a mighty king over all the gods.
4 He rules over the whole earth,
from the deepest caves to the highest
hills.
5 He rules over the sea, which he made;
the land also, which he himself formed.

6 Come, let us bow down and worship him;
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!
7 He is our God;
we are the people he looks after,
the flock for which he provides.

Let us praise the Lord!

Listen today to what he says:
8 "Don't be stubborn, as your ancestors
were at Meribah,
as they were that day in the desert at
Massah.
9 There they put me to the test and tried
me,
although they had seen what I did for
them.
10 For forty years I was disgusted with those
people:
I said, 'How disloyal they are!
They refuse to obey my commands!'

11 I was angry and made a solemn promise,
'You will never enter the land where I
would give you rest.' "

God the Supreme King

96 Sing a new song to the Lord!
Sing to the Lord, all the world!
2 Sing to the Lord, and praise him!
Every day tell the good news that he
has saved us!
3 Proclaim his glory to the nations,
his mighty acts to all peoples.

4 The Lord is great, and must be highly
praised;
he must be feared more than all the
gods.
5 The gods of all other nations are only
idols,
but the Lord made the heavens.
6 Glory and majesty are around him,
greatness and beauty are in his temple.

7 All people on earth, praise the Lord!
Praise his glory and might!
8 Praise the Lord's glorious name;
bring an offering and come into his tem-
ple.
9 Bow down before the Holy One when he
appears;
tremble before him, all the earth!

10 Say to all the nations, "The Lord is king!
The earth is set firmly in place and can-
not be moved;
he will judge all peoples with justice."
11 Be glad, earth and sky!
Roar, sea, and all the creatures in you;
12 be glad, fields, and everything in you!
Then the trees in the woods will shout for

joy before the Lord,
13 because he comes to rule the earth.
He will rule all peoples of the world
with justice and fairness.

God the Supreme Ruler

97 The Lord is king! Be glad, earth!
Rejoice, all you islands of the seas!
2 Clouds and darkness are around him;
his kingdom is based on righteousness and justice.
3 Fire goes in front of him,
and burns up his enemies around him.
4 His lightning lights up the world;
the earth sees it and trembles.
5 The hills melt like wax before the Lord,
before the Lord of all the earth.
6 The heavens proclaim his righteousness,
and all peoples see his glory.

7 All who worship images are ashamed,
all who boast of their idols;
all the gods bow down before him.
8 The people of Zion are glad,
and the cities of Judah rejoice,
because of your judgments, Lord!
9 Lord Almighty, you are ruler of all the earth;
you are much greater than all the gods.

10 The Lord loves those who hate evil;[1]
he protects the lives of his people,
he rescues them from the power of the wicked.
11 Light shines on the righteous,
and gladness on the good.
12 All you that are righteous, be glad,
because of what the Lord has done!

[1]The Lord loves those who hate evil; *Hebrew* Hate evil, you who love the Lord.

Remember what the Holy One has done,
and give thanks to him!

God the Ruler of the World

98 Sing a new song to the Lord;
he has done wonderful things!
By his own power and holy strength,
he has won the victory.
2 The Lord announced his victory;
he made his saving power known to the nations.
3 He kept his promise to the people of Israel,
with constant love and loyalty for them.
All people everywhere have seen the victory of our God!

4 Sing for joy to the Lord, all the earth;
praise him with songs and shouts of joy!
5 Sing praises to the Lord with harps;
play music on the harps!
6 With trumpets and horns,
shout for joy before the Lord, the king!

7 Roar, sea, and all creatures in you;
sing, earth, and all who live there!
8 Clap your hands, oceans;
hills, sing together with joy before the Lord,
9 because he comes to rule the earth!
He will rule all peoples of the world
with justice and fairness.

God the Supreme King

99 The Lord is king;
the people tremble;
he sits on his throne on the cherubim;
the earth shakes.
2 The Lord is mighty in Zion;
he rules over all the nations.

3 Everyone will praise his great and majestic name.
Holy is he!

4 Mighty king,[a] you love what is right;
you have brought justice to Israel;
you have brought righteousness and fairness.
5 Praise the Lord our God;
worship before his throne!
Holy is he!

6 Moses and Aaron were his priests,
and Samuel was one who worshiped him;
they called to the Lord and he answered them.
7 He spoke to them from the column of cloud;
they obeyed the laws and commandments that he gave them.

8 Lord, our God, you answered your people;
you showed them that you are a God who forgives,
but you punished them for their sins.
9 Praise the Lord our God
and worship at his sacred mountain!
The Lord our God is holy!

A Hymn of Praise

100 Sing for joy to the Lord, all the world!
2 Worship the Lord gladly,
and come before him with joyful songs!

3 Never forget that the Lord is God!
He made us, and we belong to him;
we are his people, we are his flock.

[a] Mighty king; *Hebrew* The might of the king.

4 Enter his temple with thanksgiving,
go into his sanctuary with praise!
Give thanks to him and praise him!

5 The Lord is good;
his love lasts forever,
and his faithfulness for all time.

A King's Promise

101 My song is about loyalty and justice,
and I sing it to you, Lord.
2 My conduct will be faultless.
When will you come to me?

I will live a pure life in my house;
3 I will never tolerate evil.

I hate the actions of those who turn away from God;
I will have nothing to do with them.
4 I will not be dishonest;
I will not even think of evil.

5 I will destroy a man
who whispers evil things about his friend;
I will not tolerate a man
who is proud and arrogant.

6 I will approve of those who are faithful to God,
and let them live in my palace;
those who are completely honest
will be allowed to serve me.

7 No liar will live in my palace;
no hypocrite will remain in my presence.
8 Day after day I will destroy
all the wicked in our land;

I will expel all evil men
from the city of the Lord.

The Prayer of a Troubled Man[r]

102 Listen to my prayer, Lord,
and hear my cry for help!
2 Don't hide yourself from me
when I am in trouble!
Listen to me,
and answer me quickly when I call!

3 My life disappears like smoke;
my body burns like fire.
4 I am beaten down like dry grass;
I have lost my desire for food.
5 I groan aloud;
I am nothing but skin and bones.
6 I am like a wild bird in the desert,
like an owl in abandoned ruins.
7 I lie awake;
I am like a lonely bird on a housetop.
8 All day long my enemies insult me;
those who make fun of me use my name
in cursing.

9 Ashes are my food,
and my tears are mixed with my drink,
10 because of your anger and fury.
You picked me up and threw me away.
11 My life is like the evening shadows;
I am like dry grass.

12 But you, Lord, are king forever;
all generations will remember you.
13 You will rise and take pity on Zion;
the time has come to have mercy on
her;

[r] *Hebrew title:* The prayer of a man in trouble who in distress pours out his complaint to the Lord.

this is the right time!
14 Your servants love her, even though she is
destroyed;
they have pity on her, even though she
is in ruins.

15 The nations will fear the Lord;
all the kings of the earth will fear his
power.
16 When the Lord rebuilds Zion,
he will reveal his greatness.
17 He will hear his abandoned people
and listen to their prayer.

18 Write down for the coming generation
what the Lord did,
so that people not yet born will praise
him.
19 The Lord looked down from his holy
place on high,
he looked down from heaven to the
earth,
20 to hear the groans of prisoners,
and to set free those who were con-
demned to die.
21 And so men will proclaim the name of the
Lord in Zion;
they will give thanks to him in Jeru-
salem,
22 when nations and kingdoms come
together
and worship the Lord.

23 The Lord made me weak while I was still
young;
he has shortened my life.
24 My God, do not take me away now,
before I grow old!

Lord, you live forever;
25 long ago you created the earth,
and with your own hands you made the
heavens.

[26] They will all disappear, but you will remain;
they will all wear out like clothes.
You will change them like clothes, and they will vanish;
[27] but you are always the same, and your life never ends.
[28] Our children will live in safety,
and their descendants will always live under your protection.

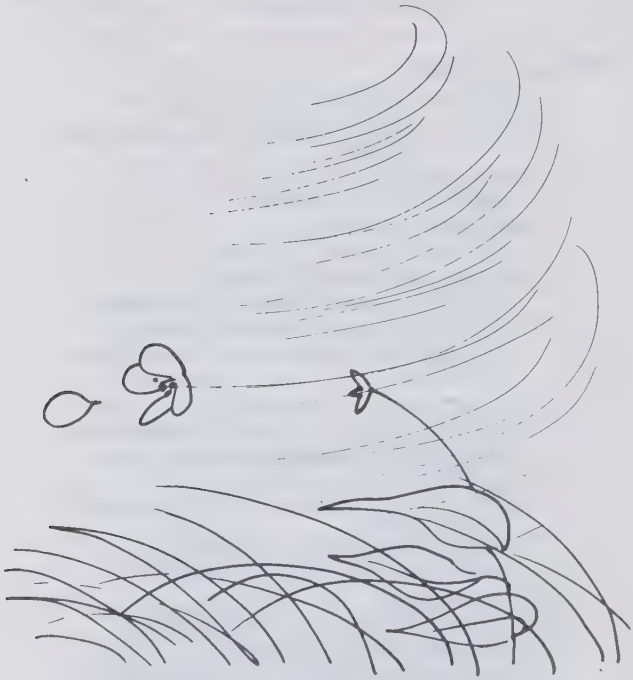
The Love of God

103 Praise the Lord, my soul!
All my being, praise his holy name!
[2] Praise the Lord, my soul,
and do not forget how kind he is.
[3] He forgives all my sins
and heals all my diseases;
[4] he saves me from the grave
and blesses me with love and mercy;
[5] he fills my life[a] with good things,
so that I stay young and strong like an eagle.

[6] The Lord judges in favor of the oppressed
and gives them their rights.
[7] He told his plans to Moses
and let the people of Israel see his mighty acts.
[8] The Lord is merciful and loving,
slow to become angry, and full of constant love.
[9] He does not keep on reprimanding;
he is not angry forever.
[10] He does not punish us as we deserve,
or repay us for our sins and wrongs.
[11] As high as the sky is above the earth,
so great is his love for those who fear him.

[a] my life; *Hebrew unclear.*

12 As far as the east is from the west,
so far does he remove our sins from us.
13 As kind as a father is to his children,
so the Lord is kind to those who fear
him.
14 He knows what we are made of;
he remembers that we are dust.



The wind blows on it, and it is gone

15 As for man, his life is like grass;
he grows and flourishes like a wild flower.
16 Then the wind blows on it, and it is gone,
and no one sees it again.
17 But the Lord's love for those who honor him lasts forever,
and his goodness endures for all generations,
18 to those who are true to his covenant,
and who faithfully obey his commandments.

19 The Lord set up his throne in heaven;
he is king over all.
20 Praise the Lord, you strong and mighty angels,
who obey his commands,
who listen to what he says!
21 Praise the Lord, all you heavenly powers,
you servants who do what he wants!
22 Praise the Lord, all his creatures,
in every place he rules!
Praise the Lord, my soul!

In Praise of the Creator

104 Praise the Lord, my soul!
Lord, my God, how great you are!
You are clothed with majesty and glory;
2 you cover yourself with light.
You stretched out the heavens like a tent,
3 and built your home on the waters above.
You use the clouds as your chariot,
and walk on the wings of the wind.
4 You use the winds as your messengers,
and flashes of lightning as your servants.

5 You have set the earth firmly on its foundations,

and it will never be moved.
6 You placed the ocean over it like a robe,
and the water covered the mountains;
7 but when you reprimanded the waters,
they fled;
when they heard your shout of command, they rushed away.
8 They went over the mountains down into the valleys,
to the place you had made for them:
9 you set a boundary they can never pass,
to keep them from covering the earth again.

10 You make springs flow in the valleys,
and water run between the hills.
11 They provide water for the wild animals;
the wild donkeys quench their thirst;
12 in the trees near by
the birds make their nests and sing.

13 From heaven you send rain on the mountains,
and the earth is filled with your blessings.
14 You make grass grow for the cattle,
and plants for man to use,
so he can grow his crops,
15 and produce wine to make him happy,
olive oil to make him cheerful,
and bread to give him strength.

16 The cedars of Lebanon get plenty of rain,
the Lord's own trees, which he planted.
17 There the birds build their nests;
the storks nest in the fir trees.
18 The wild goats live in the high mountains,
and the badgers hide in the cliffs.

19 You created the moon to mark the months;
the sun knows the time to set.

You make springs flow in the valley

20 You made the night, and in the darkness
all the wild animals come out.
21 The young lions roar while they hunt,
looking for the food that God gives
them.
22 When the sun rises they go back
and lie down in their dens.
23 Then men go out to do their work,
and keep working until evening.

24 Lord, you have made so many things!
How wisely you made them all!
The earth is filled with your creatures.
25 There is the ocean, large and wide,
where countless creatures live,
large and small alike;
26 the ships sail on it, and Leviathan plays in
it,
that sea monster which you made.

27 All of them depend on you,
to give them food when they need it.
28 You give it to them, and they eat it;
you provide food, and they are satisfied.
29 When you turn away, they are afraid;
when you hold back your breath, they
die,
and go back to the soil they came from.
30 But when you give them breath, they live;
you give new life to the earth.

31 May the glory of the Lord last forever!
May the Lord be happy with what he
made!
32 He looks at the earth, and it trembles;
he touches the mountains, and they
pour out smoke.

33 I will sing to the Lord all my life;
I will sing praises to my God as long as
I live.
34 May he be pleased with my song,

because he makes me glad.
35 May sinners be destroyed from the earth;
may the wicked be no more!

Praise the Lord, my soul!
Praise the Lord!

God and His People

105 Give thanks to the Lord, proclaim his greatness,
and make known to the nations what he has done!
2 Sing to him, sing praise to him;
tell all the wonderful things he has done!
3 Be glad that we belong to him;
let all who serve the Lord rejoice!
4 Go to the Lord for help;
stay in his presence always.
5-6 You descendants of Abraham, his servant,
you descendants of Jacob, his chosen one:
remember his great and wonderful miracles,
and the judgments he gave.

7 He, the Lord, is our God;
his commands are for all the world.
8 He will keep his covenant forever,
his promises for a thousand generations,
9 the agreement he made with Abraham,
and his promise to Isaac.
10 The Lord made an eternal covenant with Israel,
a lasting agreement with Jacob, when he said,
11 "I will give you the land of Canaan;
it will be your own possession."

12 God's people were few in number,

and they were strangers in the land.
13 They wandered from country to country,
from one kingdom to another,
14 but he did not let anyone oppress them,
and he reprimanded kings on their account.
15 He said, "Don't touch my chosen servants;
do not harm my prophets!"

16 When the Lord sent famine to their country,
and took away all their food,
17 he sent Joseph ahead of them,
who had been sold as a slave.
18 His feet were hurt by tight chains,
and an iron collar was put around his neck,
19 until what he had predicted came true.
The word of the Lord proved him right.
20 Then the king of Egypt had him released;
the ruler of nations set him free.
21 He put him in charge of his government,
and made him ruler over all the land,
22 with complete authority over the king's officials,
and power to instruct his advisers.

23 Then Jacob went to Egypt,
and settled in that country.
24 The Lord let his people have many children,
and made them stronger than their enemies.
25 He made the Egyptians hate his people,
and act deceitfully with his servants.

26 Then he sent his servant Moses,
and Aaron, whom he chose.
27 They did God's mighty acts,
and performed miracles in Egypt.
28 He sent darkness on the land,

but the Egyptians did not obey[1] his command.
29 He turned their rivers into blood,
and killed all their fish.
30 Their country was filled with frogs,
even the king's palace.
31 God commanded, and flies and gnats
filled the whole country.
32 He sent hail and lightning on their land,
instead of rain;
33 he destroyed their grapevines and fig trees,
and broke down the trees.
34 He commanded, and the grasshoppers came,
countless millions of them;
35 they ate all the plants in the land;
they ate all the crops.
36 He killed the firstborn sons
of all the families of Egypt.

37 Then he led the Israelites out;
they carried silver and gold,
and all of them were strong and healthy.
38 The Egyptians were glad when they left,
because they were afraid of them.
39 He put a cloud over his people
and a fire to give them light by night.
40 They[2] asked, and he sent quails,
he gave them food from heaven to satisfy them.
41 He opened a rock, and water gushed out,
flowing through the desert like a river.
42 He remembered his sacred promise
to Abraham his servant.

43 So he led his people out with singing,
his chosen people with shouts of joy.
44 He gave them the lands of foreigners,

[1] *Some ancient translations* did not obey; *Hebrew* obeyed. [2] *Some ancient translations* They; *Hebrew* He.

and let them take over their fields,
45 so that his people would obey his laws,
and keep his commandments.

Praise the Lord!

The Lord's Goodness to His People

106 Praise the Lord!

Give thanks to the Lord, because he is good;
his love is eternal.
2 Who can tell all the great things he has done?
Who can praise him enough?
3 Happy are those who obey his command,
who always do what is right!

4 Remember me, Lord, when you help your people;
include me, when you save them.
5 Let me see the prosperity of your people,
and share in the happiness of your nation,
in the glad pride of those who belong to you.

6 We have sinned, as our ancestors did;
we have been wicked and evil.
7 Our ancestors in Egypt did not understand God's wonderful acts;
they forgot the many times he showed his love for them,
and they rebelled against the Almighty[7] at the Sea of Reeds.
8 But he saved them, as he had promised,
in order to show his great power.
9 He commanded the Sea of Reeds, and it dried up,

[7] the Almighty; *Hebrew* against the sea.

and he led his people across it as though
on dry land.
10 He saved them from those who hated
them;
he rescued them from their enemies.
11 The water drowned their enemies;
not one of them was left.
12 Then his people believed his promises,
and sang praise to him.

13 But they quickly forgot what he had done,
and acted without waiting for his ad-
vice.
14 They were filled with desire in the desert,
and put God to the test;
15 so he gave them what they asked for,
but sent a terrible disease among them.

16 There in the desert they were jealous of
Moses,
and of Aaron, the Lord's holy servant;
17 then the earth opened up and swallowed
Dathan,
and buried Abiram and his family;
18 fire came down on their followers,
and burned up those wicked people.

19 They made a gold calf at Horeb,
and worshiped this image;
20 they exchanged the glory of God
for the image of an animal that eats
grass.
21 They forgot the God who had saved them,
by his mighty acts in Egypt.
22 What wonderful things he did there!
What amazing things he did at the Sea
of Reeds!
23 And so God said he would destroy his
people;
but Moses, his chosen servant, stood up
against God,
and kept his anger from destroying
them.

24 Then they refused the pleasant land,
because they did not believe God's promise.
25 They stayed in their tents and grumbled,
and would not listen to the Lord.
26 So he gave them a solemn warning
that he would make them die in the desert,
27 and scatter their descendants among the heathen,
letting them die in foreign countries.

28 Then God's people joined in the worship of Baal, at Peor,
and ate the sacrifices offered to dead gods.
29 They stirred up the Lord's anger by their actions,
and a terrible disease broke out among them;
30 but Phinehas stood up and punished the guilty,
and the plague was stopped,
31 and this has been remembered in his favor ever since,
and will be for all time to come.

32 The Lord's people made him angry at the springs of Meribah,
and Moses was in trouble on their account.
33 They made Moses so bitter,
that he said things he shouldn't have said.

34 They did not kill the heathen,
as the Lord had commanded,
35 but intermarried with them,
and imitated their pagan ways.
36 God's people worshiped idols,
and this caused their destruction.
37 They offered their own sons and daughters

as sacrifices to pagan gods;
38 they killed these innocent people,
their own sons and daughters,
as a sacrifice to the idols of Canaan;
the land was made impure by these killings.
39 They defiled themselves by their actions,
and were unfaithful to God.

40 So the Lord was angry with his people;
he was disgusted with them.
41 He abandoned them to the power of the heathen,
and their enemies ruled over them.
42 They were oppressed by their enemies,
and were in complete subjection to them.
43 Many times the Lord rescued his people,
but they chose to rebel against him,
and sank deeper into sin,
44 Yet the Lord heard them when they cried out,
and took notice of their distress.
45 For their sake he remembered his covenant,
and because of his great love he changed his mind.
46 He made those who held them prisoners
feel sorry for them.

47 Save us, Lord our God,
and bring us back from among the nations,
so that we may praise your holy name,
and be happy in thanking you.

48 Let us praise the Lord, the God of Israel;
praise him now and forever!
All the people are to say, "Amen!"

Praise the Lord!

Book Five
(Psalms 107–150)

In Praise of God's Goodness

107 Give thanks to the Lord, because he is good;
his love is eternal!
2 Join me in praising the Lord,
all you whom he has saved.
He has rescued you from your enemies,
3 and brought you back from foreign countries,
from east and west, from north and south.[a]

4 Some wandered in the trackless desert,
and could not find their way to a city to live in;
5 they were hungry and thirsty,
and had given up all hope.
6 In their trouble they called to the Lord,
and he saved them from their distress.
7 He led them out,
straight to a city to live in.
8 They must thank the Lord for his constant love,
for the wonderful things he did for them!
9 He satisfies those who are thirsty,
and the hungry he fills with good things.

10 Some were living in gloom and darkness,
prisoners suffering in chains,
11 because they had rebelled against the commands of Almighty God,
and had rejected his instructions.
12 They were worn out from hard work;

[a]south; *Hebrew* the sea (*meaning* "west").

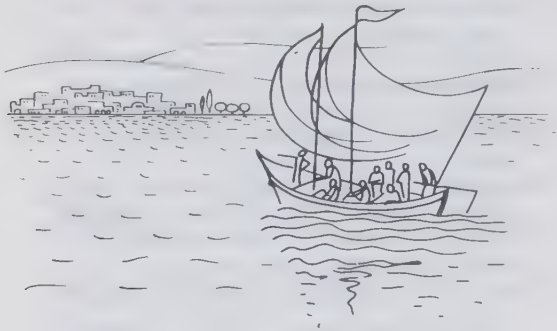
they would fall down, and no one would help.
[13] In their trouble they called to the Lord,
and he saved them from their distress.
[14] He brought them out of their gloom and darkness,
and smashed their chains.
[15] They must thank the Lord for his constant love,
for the wonderful things he did for them.
[16] He breaks down bronze doors,
and smashes iron bars.

[17] Some were sick[b] because of their sins,
suffering because of their evil;
[18] they couldn't stand the sight of food,
and were close to dying.
[19] In their trouble they called to the Lord,
and he saved them from their distress.
[20] He healed them with his command,
and saved them from the grave.
[21] They must thank the Lord for his constant love,
for the wonderful things he did for them.
[22] They must thank him with sacrifices,
and with songs of joy tell all he has done!

[23] Some sailed over the ocean in ships,
earning their living on the seas;
[24] they saw what the Lord has done,
his wonderful acts on the seas.
[25] He commanded, and a mighty wind began to blow
and stirred up the waves.
[26] The ships were lifted high in the air and plunged down into the depths;
in such danger, the men lost their courage;

[b]sick; *Hebrew* fools.

27 they stumbled and staggered like drunken
men;
all their skill was useless.
28 In their trouble they called to the Lord,
and he saved them from their distress.
29 He made the storm be still,
and the waves became quiet.
30 They were glad because of the calm,
and he brought them safe to the port
they wanted.



And he brought them safe to the port

31 They must thank the Lord for his constant
love,
for the wonderful things he did for
them.
32 They must proclaim his greatness in the
assembly of the people,
and praise him before the council of the
elders.

33 The Lord has made rivers dry up com-
pletely,
and stopped springs from flowing.
34 He has made rich soil become a salty
wasteland,
because of the wickedness of those who
lived there.

35 He has changed deserts into pools of water,
and dry land into flowing springs.
36 He has let hungry people settle there,
and they built a city to live in;
37 they sowed the fields and planted grapevines,
which produced an abundant harvest.
38 He blessed his people and they had many children,
and he kept their herds of cattle from decreasing.

39 When God's people were defeated and humiliated,
by cruel oppression and suffering,
40 he showed his contempt for their oppressors,
and made them wander in the trackless deserts.
41 But he rescued the needy from their misery,
and made their families increase like flocks.
42 The righteous see this, and are glad,
but all the wicked are put to silence.

43 May those who are wise think about these things;
may they acknowledge the Lord's constant love.

A Prayer for Help against Enemies

(Psalms 57.7-11; 60.5-12)

108 I am ready, God;
I am completely ready!
I will sing and praise you!
Wake up, my soul!
2 Wake up, my harp and lyre!
I will wake up the sun!

3 I will thank you among the nations, Lord!
I will praise you among the peoples!
4 Your constant love reaches above the heavens,
your faithfulness to the skies.

5 God, show your greatness in the sky,
and your glory over all the earth!
6 Save us by your might; answer my prayer,
so that the people you love may be rescued.

7 In his sanctuary God has said,
"In triumph I will divide Shechem,
and distribute Succoth Valley to my people.
8 Gilead is mine, and Manasseh too;
Ephraim is my helmet,
and Judah my royal scepter.
9 But I will use Moab as my washbowl
and Edom as my sandal box.
I will shout in triumph over Philistia."

10 Who will take me, God, into the fortified city?
Who will bring me to Edom?
11 Have you really rejected us?
Aren't you going to march out with our armies?
12 Help us fight the enemy,
because human help is worthless!
13 With God on our side we will win;
he will defeat our enemies.

The Complaint of a Man in Trouble

109 I praise you, God; don't be silent!
2 Wicked men and liars have attacked me,
telling lies about me.
3 They say terrible things about me,
attacking me for no reason.

4 They oppose me, even though I love
them,
and have prayed for them.
5 They pay me back evil for good,
and hatred for love.

6 Choose a corrupt man to judge my enemy,
and let one of his own enemies accuse
him.
7 May he be tried and found guilty;
may even his prayer be considered a
crime!
8 May his life soon be ended;
may another man take his job!
9 May his children become orphans,
and his wife a widow!
10 May his children be homeless beggars;
may they be driven from[c] the ruins they
live in!
11 May his creditors take away all his prop-
erty,
and strangers get everything he worked
for.
12 May no one ever be kind to him;
may no one take care of his orphans.
13 May all his descendants die,
and his name be forgotten in the next
generation.
14 May the Lord remember the evil of his
ancestors,
and never forgive his mother's sins.
15 May the Lord always remember their sins,
but may they themselves be completely
forgotten!
16 That man never thought of being kind;
the poor, the needy, and the helpless
he persecuted and killed.
17 He loved to curse—may he be cursed!
He hated to bless—may no one bless
him!
18 He cursed as easily as he dressed himself;

[c] *One ancient translation* be driven from; *Hebrew* seek.

may his curses soak into him like water,
and soak into his bones like oil!
19 May they cover him like clothes,
and be always around him like a belt.

20 May this be how the Lord punishes my enemies,
who say such terrible things against me!
21 But Lord, my God, help me as you have promised,
and rescue me because of the goodness of your love.
22 I am poor and needy;
I am hurt to the depths of my heart.
23 I am about to vanish like an evening shadow;
I am blown away like an insect.
24 My knees are weak from lack of food;
my body is thin and feeble.
25 When people see me, they make fun of me;
they shake their heads in scorn.

26 Help me, Lord my God;
save me because of your constant love!
27 Make my enemies know
that you are the one who saves me.
28 They may curse me, but you will bless me.
May my persecutors be defeated,[d]
and may I, your servant, be glad.
29 May my enemies be covered with disgrace;
may they wear their shame like a robe.

30 I will give loud thanks to the Lord;
I will praise him in the meeting of the people,
31 because he defends the poor man,
to save him from those who condemn him to death.

[d] *One ancient translation* May my persecutors be defeated; *Hebrew* They persecuted me and were defeated.

The Lord and His Chosen King

110 The Lord said to my lord, the king,
"Sit here at my right side,
until I put your enemies under your feet."
2 From Zion the Lord will extend your royal power.
"Rule over your enemies," he says.
3 The day you fight your enemies
your people will volunteer.
Like the dew early in the morning,
your young men will come to you on the sacred hills.[c]

4 The Lord made a solemn promise, and will not take it back:
"You will be a priest forever,
in the priestly order of Melchizedek."

5 The Lord is at your right side;
he will defeat kings on the day he becomes angry.
6 He will pass judgment on the nations,
and fill the battlefield with corpses;
he will defeat kings over the whole earth.
7 The king will drink from the stream by the road,
and strengthened, he will stand victorious.

In Praise of the Lord

111 Praise the Lord!

With all my heart I will thank the Lord,
in the meeting of his people.
2 How wonderful are the things the Lord does!
All who are pleased with them want to understand them.

[c] *Hebrew text uncertain and unclear.*

3 All he does is full of honor and majesty;
his righteousness is eternal.

4 The Lord does not let us forget his wonderful actions;
he is kind and merciful.
5 He provides food for those who fear him;
he never forgets his covenant.
6 He has shown his power to his people,
by giving them the lands of foreigners.

7 In all he does he is faithful and just;
all his commandments are dependable.
8 They last for all time;
they were given in truth and righteousness.
9 He brought salvation to his people,
and made an eternal covenant with them.
Holy and mighty is he!
10 The way to become wise is to fear the Lord;
he gives sound judgment to all who obey his commands.
He is to be praised forever!

The Happiness of a Good Person

112 Praise the Lord!

Happy is the man who fears the Lord,
who takes pleasure in obeying his commands.
2 His children will be mighty in the land;
the good man's descendants will be blessed.
3 His family will be wealthy and rich,
and he will be prosperous forever.

4 Light shines in the darkness for good men,
for those who are kind, merciful, and just.

5 Happy is the man who is generous in his
loans,
who runs his business honestly.
6 A good man will never fail;
he will never be forgotten.

7 He is not afraid of receiving bad news;
his faith is strong, and he trusts in the
Lord.
8 He is not worried or afraid;
he is certain he will see his enemies de-
feated.
9 He gives generously to the needy,
and his kindness is eternal;
he will be powerful and respected.
10 The wicked see this and are upset;
they glare in anger and disappear;
their hopes are gone forever.

In Praise of the Lord's Goodness

113 Praise the Lord!

You servants of the Lord,
praise his name!
2 His name will be praised,
now and forever!
3 From the east to the west,
the Lord's name be praised!
4 The Lord rules over all nations,
his glory is above the heavens.

5 There is no one like the Lord our God;
he lives in the heights above,
6 but he bends down
to see the heavens and the earth.
7 He raises the poor from the dust;
he lifts the needy from their misery,
8 and makes them companions of princes,
the princes of his people.
9 He honors the childless wife in her home;

he makes her happy by giving her children.

Praise the Lord!

A Passover Song

114 When the people of Israel left Egypt,
when Jacob's descendants left that foreign land,
2 Judah became the Lord's holy people,
Israel became his own possession.

3 The Sea of Reeds looked and ran away,
the Jordan River stopped flowing.
4 The mountains skipped like goats,
the hills skipped around like sheep.

5 What happened, Sea, to make you run away?
And you, Jordan, why did you stop flowing?
6 Mountains, why did you skip like goats?
Hills, why did you skip around like sheep?

7 Tremble, earth, at the Lord's coming,
at the presence of the God of Jacob,
8 who changes rocks into pools of water,
and stone cliffs into flowing springs.

The One True God

115 To you alone, Lord, to you alone,
and not to us, must glory be given,
because of your constant love and faithfulness.

[2] Why should the nations ask us,
"Where is your God?"
[3] Our God is in heaven,
doing whatever he wishes.
[4] Their gods are made of silver and gold,
formed by human hands.
[5] They have mouths, but cannot speak,
and eyes, but cannot see.
[6] They have ears, but cannot hear,
and noses, but cannot smell.
[7] They have hands, but cannot feel,
and feet, but cannot walk;
they cannot make a sound.
[8] May those who made them and all who
trust in them,
become like the idols they have made!

[9] Trust in the Lord, people of Israel!
He helps you and protects you.
[10] Trust in the Lord, you priests of God!
He helps you and protects you.
[11] Trust in the Lord, all who fear him!
He helps you and protects you.

[12] The Lord remembers us and will bless us;
he will bless the people of Israel,
and all the priests of God.
[13] He will bless all who fear him,
the great and the small alike.

[14] May the Lord give you children—
you and your descendants.
[15] May you be blessed by the Lord,
who made heaven and earth!

[16] Heaven belongs to the Lord alone,
but he gave the earth to men.
[17] The Lord is not praised by the dead,
by any who go down to the land of
silence.

18 But we, the living, will give thanks to him,
now and forever.

Praise the Lord!

A Man Saved from Death Praises God

116 I love the Lord, because he hears me;
he listens to my prayers.
2 He listens to me
every time I call to him.
3 Death drew its ropes tight around me,
the horrors of the grave closed in on me;
I was filled with fear and anxiety.
4 Then I called to the Lord,
"I beg you, Lord, save me!"

5 The Lord is merciful and good;
our God is compassionate.
6 The Lord protects the helpless;
when I was in danger, he saved me.
7 Be confident, my heart,
because the Lord has been good to me.

8 The Lord has saved me from death;
he stopped my tears
and kept me from defeat.
9 And so I walk in the presence of the Lord
in the world of the living.
10 I kept on believing, even when I said,
"I am completely crushed,"
11 even when I was afraid and said,
"No one can be trusted."

12 What can I offer the Lord
for all his goodness to me?
13 I will bring a drink offering to the Lord,
to thank him for saving me.
14 In the meeting of all his people,
I will give him what I have promised.

15 How painful it is to the Lord,
when one of his people dies!
16 I am your servant, Lord;
I serve you, just as my mother did.
You have set me free.
17 I will give you a sacrifice of thanksgiving,
and offer my prayer to you.
18-19 In the meeting of all your people,
in the courts of your temple, in Jerusalem,
I will give you what I have promised.

Praise the Lord!

In Praise of the Lord

117 Praise the Lord, all nations!
Praise him, all peoples!
2 His constant love for us is strong,
and his faithfulness is eternal.

Praise the Lord!

A Prayer of Thanks for Victory

118 Give thanks to the Lord, because he is good,
and his love is eternal.
2 Let the people of Israel say,
"His love is eternal."
3 Let the priests of God say,
"His love is eternal."
4 Let all who fear him say,
"His love is eternal."

5 In my distress I called to the Lord;
he answered me, and set me free.
6 The Lord is with me, I will not be afraid;
what can men do to me?
7 It is the Lord who helps me,
and I will see my enemies defeated.
8 It is better to trust in the Lord,

than to depend on men.
9 It is better to trust in the Lord,
than to depend on human leaders.

10 Many enemies were around me;
but I destroyed them by the power of
the Lord!
11 They were around me on every side;
but I destroyed them by the power of
the Lord!
12 They swarmed around me like bees,
but they burned out as quickly as a
brush fire;
by the power of the Lord I destroyed
them!
13 I was fiercely attacked and was being de-
feated,
but the Lord helped me.
14 The Lord makes me powerful and strong;
he is my Savior!

15 Listen to the glad shouts of victory in the
tents of God's people:
"The Lord's mighty power has done it!
16 His power has brought us victory,
his mighty power in battle!"

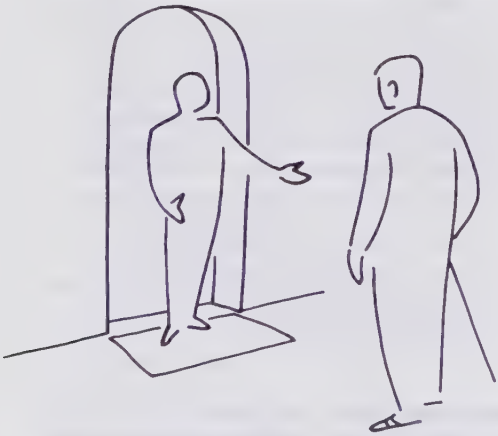
17 I will not die, but I will live,
and tell what the Lord has done.
18 He has punished me severely,
but he has not let me die.

19 Open the gates of the temple for me;
I will go in and praise the Lord!

20 This is the gate of the Lord;
only the righteous can come in!

21 I praise you, Lord, because you heard me,
because you have given me victory!

22 The stone which the builders rejected as
worthless,
turned out to be the most important of
all.
23 This was done by the Lord;
what a wonderful sight it is!
24 What a wonderful day the Lord has given
us;
let us be happy, let us celebrate!
25 Save us, Lord, save us!
Give us success, Lord!



We bless you!

26 God bless him who comes in the name of
the Lord!
From the temple of the Lord we bless
you!
27 The Lord is God; he has been good to us.
With branches in your hands start the
festival
and march around the altar.

28 You are my God, and I give you thanks;
I will proclaim your greatness.

29 Give thanks to the Lord, because he is good,
and his love is eternal.

The Law of the Lord

119 Happy are those whose lives are faultless,
who live according to the law of the Lord.
2 Happy are those who follow his commands,
who obey him with all their heart.
3 Surely they do no wrong;
they walk in the Lord's ways.
4 You have given us your laws,
and told us to obey them faithfully.
5 How I hope that I shall be faithful
in keeping your rules!
6 If I pay attention to all your commandments,
then I will not be disappointed.
7 As I learn your righteous rulings,
I will praise you with a pure heart.
8 I will obey your laws;
don't ever abandon me!

Obedience to the Law of the Lord

9 How can a young man keep his life pure?
By obeying[1] your commands.
10 With all my heart I try to serve you;
keep me from disobeying your commandments!
11 I keep your law in my heart,
so that I will not sin against you.
12 I praise you, Lord:
teach me your rules!
13 I will repeat aloud
all the laws you have given.

[1] *Some ancient translations* pure? By obeying: *Hebrew* pure in order to obey.

14 I delight in following your commands,
more than in having great wealth.
15 I study your instructions;
I examine your teachings.
16 I take pleasure in your laws,
I will not forget your commands.

Happiness in the Law of the Lord

17 Be good to me, your servant,
so that I may live and obey your teachings.
18 Open my eyes, so that I may see
the wonderful truths in your law.
19 I am here on earth for just a little while;
do not hide your commandments from me!
20 My heart aches with longing;
at all times I want to know your judgments.
21 You reprimand the proud;
cursed are those who depart from your commands.
22 Free me from their insults and scorn,
because I have kept your laws.
23 Even though the rulers meet and plot against me,
I, your servant, will study your rules.
24 Your instructions give me pleasure;
they are my advisers.

Determination to Obey the Law of the Lord

25 I lie defeated in the dust;
revive me, as you have promised!
26 I confessed all I have done, and you answered me;
teach me your rules!
27 Teach me how to obey your laws,
and I will study your wonderful teachings.
28 I am overcome by sorrow;
strengthen me, as you have promised.

[29] Keep me from going the wrong way,
and in your goodness teach me your law.
[30] I have decided to be obedient;
I have paid attention to your rules.
[31] I have followed your instructions, Lord;
don't let me be disappointed!
[32] I will eagerly obey your commands,
because you will give me more understanding.

A Prayer for Understanding

[33] Teach me, Lord, the meaning of your laws,
and I will obey them at all times.
[34] Explain your law to me, and I will obey it;
I will keep it with all my heart.
[35] Lead me in the way of your commandments,
because in them I find happiness.
[36] Make me want to obey your rules,
rather than to get rich.
[37] Keep me from paying attention to what is worthless;
be good to me, as you have promised.
[38] Keep your promise to me, your servant,
which you make to those who fear you.
[39] Save me from the insults which I fear;
how wonderful your rules are!
[40] I want to obey your commands;
because you are righteous, be good to me!

Trusting the Law of the Lord

[41] Show me how much you love me, Lord,
and save me according to your promise.
[42] Then I can answer those who insult me,
because I trust in your word.
[43] Enable me to speak the true message at all times,
because my hope is in your judgments.

44 I will always obey your law,
forever and ever!
45 I will live in complete freedom,
because I have tried to obey your rules.
46 I will announce your commands to kings,
and I will not be ashamed.
47 I find pleasure in obeying your commandments,
because I love them.
48 I respect and love your commandments;
I will meditate on your instructions.

Confidence in the Law of the Lord

49 Remember your promise to me, your servant;
it has given me hope.
50 Even in my suffering I was comforted,
because your promise gave me life.
51 The proud have been scornful of me,
but I have not departed from your law.
52 I remember the instructions you gave me in the past,
and they bring me comfort, Lord.
53 I am filled with anger,
when I see the wicked breaking your law.
54 Living far from my real home,
I compose songs about your commands.
55 In the night I think of you, Lord,
and I obey your law.
56 This is my happiness:
I obey your commands.

Devotion to the Law of the Lord

57 You are all I want, Lord;
I promise to obey your laws.
58 I ask you with all my heart:
have mercy on me, as you have promised!
59 I have considered my conduct,
and promise to follow your rules.

60 Without delay, I hurry
to obey your commandments.
61 The wicked draw their ropes tight around me,
but I do not forget your law.
62 In the middle of the night I wake up
to praise you for your righteous judgments.
63 I am a friend of all who serve you,
of all who obey your laws.
64 Lord, the earth is full of your constant love;
teach me your commandments!

The Value of the Law of the Lord

65 You have kept your promise, Lord,
and you are good to me, your servant.
66 Give me wisdom and knowledge,
because I trust in your commands.
67 Before you punished me I used to go wrong,
but now I obey your word.
68 How good you are, how kind;
teach me your commands!
69 Proud men have told lies about me,
but with all my heart I obey your rules.
70 These men have no understanding,
but I find pleasure in your law.
71 My punishment was good for me,
because it made me learn your commands.
72 The law that you give means more to me
than all the money in the world.

The Justice of the Law of the Lord

73 You created me, and you keep me safe;
give me understanding, so that I may learn your laws.

74 Those who fear you will be glad when
they see me,
because I trust in your promise.
75 I know that your rules are righteous, Lord,
and that you punished me because you
are faithful.
76 Let your constant love comfort me,
as you have promised me, your servant.
77 Have mercy on me, and I will live,
because I take pleasure in your law.
78 May the proud be ashamed for falsely ac-
cusing me;
as for me, I will meditate on your rules.
79 May those who fear you come to me,
and those who know your commands.
80 May I perfectly obey your command-
ments,
and be spared the shame of defeat.

Prayer for Deliverance

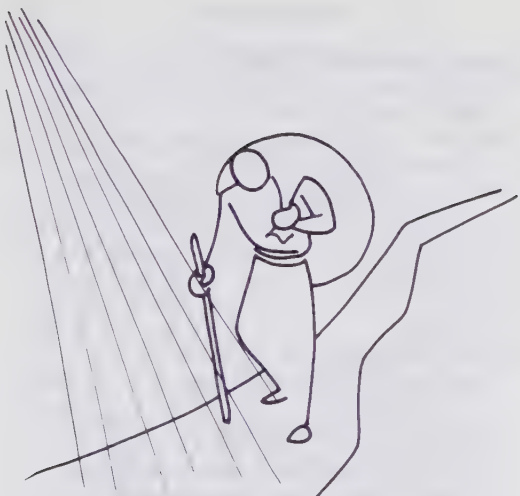
81 I am worn out, Lord, waiting for you to
save me;
I place my trust in your word.
82 My eyes are tired from watching for what
you promised,
while I ask, "When will you help me?"
83 I am as useless as a discarded wineskin;
yet I have not forgotten your com-
mands.
84 How much longer do I have to wait?
When will you punish those who perse-
cute me?
85 Proud men, who do not obey your law,
have dug pits to catch me.
86 Your commandments are all trustworthy;
men persecute me with lies; help me!
87 They have almost succeeded in killing me,
but I have not neglected your rules.
88 Because of your constant love, be good to
me,
so that I may obey your laws.

Faith in the Law of the Lord

89 Your word, Lord, will last forever;
it is firm in heaven.
90 Your faithfulness endures through all the ages;
you have set the earth in place and it remains.
91 All things remain to this day because of your command,
because they are all your servants.
92 If your law had not been the source of my joy,
I would have died from my punishment.
93 I will never neglect your rules,
because by them you have kept me alive.
94 I am yours—save me!
I have tried to obey your commands.
95 Wicked men are waiting to kill me,
but I will meditate on your laws.
96 I have learned that nothing is perfect;
but your commandment has no limits.

Love for the Law of the Lord

97 How I love your law!
I think about it all day long.
98 Your commandment is with me all the time,
and makes me wiser than all my enemies.
99 I understand more than all my teachers,
because I think on your instructions.
100 I have greater wisdom than old men,
because I obey your commands.
101 I have avoided all evil conduct,
because I want to obey your word.
102 I have not neglected your instructions,
because it was you who taught me.
103 How sweet is the taste of your rules;
they are sweeter than honey!
104 I gain wisdom from your laws,
and so I hate all bad conduct.



A light for my path

Light from the Law of the Lord

105 Your word is a lamp to guide me,
and a light for my path.
106 I will keep my solemn promise
to obey your righteous instructions.
107 My sufferings, Lord, are terrible indeed;
keep me alive, as you have promised!
108 Accept my prayer of thanks, Lord,
and teach me your commands.
109 I am always ready to risk my life;
I have not forgotten your law.
110 Wicked men lay a trap for me,
but I have not disobeyed your commands.
111 Your commandments are my eternal possession;
they are the joy of my heart.
112 I have decided to obey your rules,
until the day I die.

Safety in the Law of the Lord

113 I hate those who are not loyal to you,
but I love your law.
114 You are my defender and protector;
I hope in your promise.
115 Go away from me, you sinful people!
I will obey the commandments of my God.
116 Give me strength, as you promised, and I shall live;
don't let me be disappointed in my hope!
117 Hold me, and I will be safe,
and I will always pay attention to your commands.
118 You reject all who disobey your laws;
their deceitful schemes are useless.
119 You treat all the wicked like rubbish,
and so I love your instructions.
120 Because of you, I am afraid;
I am filled with fear because of your judgments.

Obedience to the Law of the Lord

121 I have done what is right and good;
don't abandon me to my enemies!
122 Promise that you will help your servant;
don't let proud men trouble me!
123 My eyes are tired from watching for your salvation,
for the deliverance you promised.
124 Treat me according to your constant love,
and teach me your commands.
125 I am your servant, so give me understanding
that I may know your teachings.
126 Lord, it is time for you to act,
because people are disobeying your law!
127 I love your commands more than gold,
more than the finest gold.

128 And so I follow[s] all your instructions;
I hate all wrong ways.

Desire to Obey the Law of the Lord

129 Your teachings are wonderful;
I obey them with all my heart.
130 The explanation of your teachings gives light,
and brings wisdom to the inexperienced.
131 With open mouth I pant,
in my desire for your commands.
132 Turn to me and have mercy on me
as you do on those who love you.
133 Keep me from falling, as you have promised;
don't let me be overcome by evil.
134 Save me from those who oppress me,
so that I may obey your commands.
135 Bless me with your presence,
and teach me your laws.
136 My tears pour down like a river,
because people do not obey your law.

The Justice of the Law of the Lord

137 You are righteous, Lord,
and your laws are right.
138 The rules that you have given
are completely fair and right.
139 My anger burns in me like a fire,
because my enemies disregard your commands.
140 How certain your promise is!
How much your servant loves it!
141 I am unimportant and despised,
but I do not neglect your rules.
142 Your righteousness will last forever,
and your law is always true.
143 I am filled with trouble and distress,

[s] *Some ancient translations* I follow; *Hebrew uncertain.*

but your commandments bring me joy.
144 Your instructions are righteous forever;
give me understanding, and I shall live.

Prayer for Deliverance

145 With all my heart I call to you;
answer me, Lord, and I will obey your commands!
146 I call to you;
save me, and I will follow your rules!
147 Before sunrise I call to you for help;
I place my hope in your promise.
148 All night long I lie awake,
to meditate on your instructions.
149 Hear me, Lord, according to your constant love;
preserve my life, according to your goodness!
150 My cruel persecutors are coming closer,
people who never keep your law.
151 But you are near to me, Lord,
and all your promises are true.
152 Long ago I learned about your instructions;
you made them to last forever.

Plea for Salvation

153 Look at my suffering, and save me,
because I have not neglected your law.
154 Defend my cause, and set me free;
save me, as you have promised!
155 The wicked will not be saved,
because they do not obey your laws;
156 but your compassion, Lord, is great,
so save me, according to your decision.
157 I have many enemies and oppressors,
but I do not fail to obey your laws.
158 When I look at those traitors, I am filled with disgust,
because they do not obey your command.

159 See how I love your instructions, Lord!
Save me, according to your constant love.
160 The heart of your law is truth,
and all your righteous rules are eternal.

Dedication to the Law of the Lord

161 Powerful men attack me unjustly,
but it is your law that I respect.
162 How happy I am because of your promises,
as happy as someone who finds rich treasure.
163 I hate and detest all lies,
but I love your law.
164 Seven times each day I thank you
for your righteous judgments.
165 Those who love your law have complete security,
and there is nothing that can make them fall.
166 I wait for you to save me, Lord,
and I do what you command.
167 I obey your rules;
I love them with all my heart.
168 I obey your commands and your instructions;
you see everything I do.

A Prayer for Help

169 Let my cry for help reach you, Lord!
Give me understanding, as you have promised.
170 Let my prayer come before you,
and save me, according to your promise!
171 I will always praise you,
because you teach me your rules.
172 I will sing about your law,
because your commands are just.
173 Be always ready to help me,

because I follow your commands.
[174] How I long for your salvation, Lord!
I find happiness in your law.
[175] Give me life, so that I may praise you;
may your instructions help me!
[176] I wander about like a lost sheep;
so come and look for me, your servant,
because I have not neglected your laws.

A Prayer for Help

120 When I was in trouble I called to the Lord,
and he answered me.
[2] Save me, Lord,
from liars and deceivers!

[3] You liars, what will God do to you?
How will he punish you?
[4] With a soldier's sharp arrows,
with red-hot charcoals!

[5] Living among you is as bad as living in Meshech,
or among the people of Kedar!
[6] I have lived too long
with people who hate peace!
[7] When I speak of peace,
they are for war.

The Lord Our Protector

121 I look to the mountains;
where will my help come from?
[2] My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

[3] May he not let me fall;
may my protector keep awake!

4 The protector of Israel
does not doze or sleep!
5 The Lord will guard you;
he is by your side to protect you.
6 The sun will not hurt you during the day,
nor the moon during the night.

7 The Lord will protect you from all danger;
he will keep you safe.
8 He will protect you as you come and go,
from now on and forever.

In Praise of Jerusalem

122 I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the Lord's house!"
2 And now we are here,
standing inside the gates of Jerusalem!

3 Jerusalem is a city restored
in beautiful order and harmony!
4 This is where the tribes come,
the tribes of Israel,
to give thanks to the Lord,
as he commanded them.
5 This is where the law courts are,
where the king judges his people.

6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!
"May those who love you prosper!
7 May there be peace inside your walls,
and safety in your palaces."
8 For the sake of my friends and companions,
I say to Jerusalem, "Peace be with you!"
9 For the sake of the house of the Lord, our God,
I pray for your prosperity.

A Prayer for Mercy

123 Lord, I look up to you,
up to heaven, where you rule.
2 As the servant depends on his master,
and the maid depends on her mistress,
so we keep looking to you, Lord our God,
until you have mercy on us.

3 Be merciful to us, Lord, be merciful;
we have been treated with so much contempt!
4 We have been mocked too long by the rich,
and scorned by proud oppressors!

God the Savior of His People

124 What if the Lord had not been on our side?
Answer, Israel!
2 "If the Lord had not been on our side,
when our enemies attacked us,
3 then they would have swallowed us alive,
in their furious anger against us;
4 then the flood would have carried us away,
the water would have drowned us,
5 the raging torrent would have drowned us."

6 Let us thank the Lord,
who has not let our enemies destroy us.
7 We have escaped like a bird from the hunter's trap;
the trap has been broken, and we are free!
8 Our help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

The Security of God's People

125 Those who trust in the Lord are
like Mount Zion,
which can never be shaken, never be
moved.
2 As the mountains surround Jerusalem,
so the Lord surrounds his people,
from now on and forever.

3 The wicked will not always rule over the
land of God's people;
if they did, God's people themselves
might do evil.
4 Lord, do good to those who are good,
to those who obey your commands!
5 But punish those who follow their own
wicked ways,
when you punish the evildoers!

Peace be with Israel!

A Prayer for Deliverance

126 When the Lord brought us back
to Zion,
it was like a dream!
2 How we laughed, how we sang for joy!
Then the other nations said about us,
"The Lord did great things for them!"
3 Indeed he did great things for us;
how happy we were!

4 Lord, take us back to our land,
just as your rain brings water back to
dry riverbeds.
5 Let those who cried while they planted,
gather the harvest with joy!

6 Those who cried as they went out carrying
the seed
will come back singing for joy,
bringing in the harvest!

Gather the harvest with joy!

In Praise of God's Goodness

127 If the Lord does not build the house,
the work of the builders is useless;
if the Lord does not protect the city,
it does no good for the sentries to stand guard.
2 It is useless to work so hard for a living,
getting up early and going to bed late,
because the Lord gives rest to those he loves.

3 Children are a gift from the Lord;
they are a real blessing.
4 The sons a man has when he is young
are like arrows in a soldier's hand.
5 Happy is the man who has many such arrows!
He will never be defeated

when he meets his enemies in the place
of judgment.

The Reward of Obedience to the Lord

128 Happy are those who fear the Lord,
who live by his commands!
2 You will earn enough to provide for your needs;
you will be happy and prosperous.
3 Your wife will be like a fruitful vine in your home,
and your sons will be like young olive trees around your table.
4 A man who obeys the Lord
will surely be blessed like this.

5 May the Lord bless you from Zion!
May you see Jerusalem prosper
all the days of your life!
6 May you live to see your grandchildren!

Peace be with Israel!

Prayer against Israel's Enemies

129 Israel, tell how cruelly your enemies have persecuted you
ever since you were young!
2 "Ever since I was young,
my enemies have persecuted me cruelly,
but they have not overcome me.
3 They cut deep wounds in my back,
and made it like a plowed field.
4 But the Lord, the righteous one,
has freed me from slavery."

5 May all who hate Zion
be defeated and driven back!
6 May they be like grass growing on the housetops,

that dries up before it can be cut.
7 No one gathers it up,
or carries it away in bundles.
8 No one who passes by will say,
"May the Lord bless you!
We bless you in the name of the Lord!"

A Prayer for Help

130 In my despair I call to you, Lord.
2 Hear my cry, Lord,
listen to my call for help!
3 If you kept a record of our sins,
who could escape being condemned?
4 But you forgive us,
so that we should fear you.

5 I wait eagerly for the Lord's help,
and in his word I trust.
6 I wait for the Lord,
more eagerly than watchmen wait for the dawn,
than watchmen wait for the dawn.

7 Israel, trust in the Lord,
because his love is constant,
and he is always willing to save.
8 He will save his people Israel
from all their sins.

A Prayer of Humble Trust

131 Lord, I have given up my pride,
and turned from my arrogance.
I am not concerned with great matters,
or with subjects too difficult for me.
2 But I am content and at peace.
As a child lies quietly in its mother's arms,
so my heart is quiet within me.
3 Israel, trust in the Lord,
from now on and forever!

In Praise of the Sanctuary

132 Lord, do not forget David
and all the work he did.
2 Remember, Lord, what he promised,
the vow he made to you, the Mighty
God of Israel:
3 "I will not go home or go to bed;
4 I will not rest or sleep,
5 until I provide a place for the Lord,
a home for the Mighty God of Israel."

6 We heard about the covenant box in Bethlehem,
and found it in the fields of Jaar.
7 We said, "Let us go to the Lord's house;
let us worship before his throne!"

8 Come to your resting place, Lord, with the covenant box,
the symbol of your power.
9 May the priests proclaim that you save your people;
may all your people shout for joy!

10 You made a promise to your servant David;
do not reject your chosen king, Lord!
11 You made a solemn promise to David,
and you will not take it back:
"I will make one of your sons king,
and he will rule after you.
12 If your sons are true to my covenant,
and to the commands I give them,
their sons, also, will follow you as kings
for all time."

13 The Lord has chosen Zion;
he wants to make his home there:
14 "This is where I will live forever;
this is where I want to rule.
15 I will richly provide Zion with all she needs;

I will satisfy her poor with food.
16 I will have her priests proclaim that I save,
and her people will sing and shout for joy.
17 Here I will make one of David's descendants a great king;
here I will preserve the rule of my chosen king.
18 I will cover his enemies with shame,
but his kingdom will prosper and flourish."

In Praise of Brotherly Love

133 How wonderful it is, how pleasant,
for God's people to live together like brothers!
2 It is like the precious olive oil
running down from Aaron's head and beard,
down to the collar of his robes.
3 It is like the dew on Mount Hermon,
falling on the hills of Zion.
That is where the Lord has promised his blessing,
life that never ends.

A Call to Praise God

134 Come, praise the Lord,
all his servants,
all who serve in his temple at night.
2 Raise your hands in prayer in the temple,
and praise the Lord!

3 May the Lord, who made heaven and earth,
bless you from Zion.

A Hymn of Praise

135 Praise the Lord!

Praise his name, you servants of the Lord,
2 who stand in the Lord's house,
in the sanctuary of our God.
3 Praise the Lord, because he is good;
sing praises to his name, because he is kind.
4 He chose Jacob for himself,
the people of Israel for his own.

5 I know that our Lord is great;
he is greater than all the gods.
6 He does whatever he wishes
in heaven and on earth,
in the seas and in the depths below.
7 He brings storm clouds from the ends of the earth;
he makes lightning for the storms,
and brings out the wind from his storeroom.

8 In Egypt he killed all the firstborn
of both men and animals.
9 There he performed miracles and wonders
to punish Pharaoh and all his officials.
10 He destroyed many nations,
and killed powerful kings:
11 Sihon, king of the Amorites,
Og, king of Bashan,
and all the kings in Canaan.
12 He gave their land to his people;
he gave it to Israel.

13 Lord, men will always know that you are God;
all generations will remember you.
14 The Lord will take pity on his people;
he will set his servants free.

15 The idols of the nations are made of silver
and gold;
they are formed by human hands.
16 They have mouths, but cannot speak,
and eyes, but cannot see.
17 They have ears, but cannot hear;
there is no breath in their mouths.
18 May those who made them and all who
trust in them
become like the idols they have made!

19 Praise the Lord, people of Israel;
praise him, you priests of God!
20 Praise the Lord, you Levites;
praise him, all you that fear him!
21 Praise the Lord in Zion,
in Jerusalem, his home.

Praise the Lord!

A Hymn of Thanksgiving

136 Give thanks to the Lord, because
he is good,
and his love is eternal.
2 Give thanks to the greatest of all gods;
his love is eternal.
3 Give thanks to the mightiest of all lords;
his love is eternal.

4 He alone does great miracles;
his love is eternal.
5 By his wisdom he made the heavens;
his love is eternal;
6 he built the earth on the deep waters;
his love is eternal.
7 He made the sun and the moon;
his love is eternal;
8 the sun to rule over the day;
his love is eternal;

9 the moon and the stars to rule over the night;
his love is eternal.

10 He killed the firstborn sons of the Egyptians;
his love is eternal.
11 He led the people of Israel out of Egypt;
his love is eternal;
12 with his strong hand, his powerful arm;
his love is eternal.
13 He divided the Sea of Reeds;
his love is eternal;
14 he led his people through it;
his love is eternal;
15 he drowned Pharaoh and his army;
his love is eternal.

16 He led his people in the desert;
his love is eternal.
17 He killed powerful kings;
his love is eternal;
18 he killed famous kings;
his love is eternal;
19 Sihon, king of the Amorites;
his love is eternal;
20 and Og, king of Bashan;
his love is eternal.
21 He gave their land to his people;
his love is eternal;
22 he gave it to Israel, his servant;
his love is eternal.

23 He did not forget us when we were defeated;
his love is eternal;
24 he freed us from our enemies;
his love is eternal.
25 He gives food to all men and animals;
his love is eternal.

26 Give thanks to the God of heaven;
his love is eternal.

The Lament of Israelites in Exile

137 By the rivers of Babylon
we sat and cried when we
remembered Zion.
2 On the willows nearby
we hung our harps.
3 Those who captured us told us to sing;
they told us to entertain them:
"Sing us a song about Zion!"

4 How can we sing the Lord's song
in a foreign land?
5 May I never be able to play the harp again,
if I forget you, Jerusalem!
6 May I never be able to sing again,
if I do not remember you,
if I do not think of you as my greatest
joy!

7 Remember, Lord, what the Edomites did,
the day Jerusalem was captured.
Remember how they kept saying,
"Tear it down to the ground!"
8 Babylon, you will be destroyed!
Happy is the man who pays you back
for what you have done to us—
9 who takes your babies,
and smashes them on a rock!

A Prayer of Thanksgiving

138 I thank you, Lord, with all my
heart;
I sing praise to you before the gods.
2 I bow down in front of your holy temple
and praise your name,
because of your constant love and faith-
fulness,
because you have shown that you and
your commands are supreme.[b]

[b] "shown that you and your commands are supreme; *Hebrew* shown your command is greater than all your name.

3 You answered me when I called to you;
with your strength you strengthened me.

4 All the kings of the earth will praise you, Lord,
because they have heard your promises.
5 They will sing about what the Lord has done,
and about his great glory.
6 Even though the Lord is so high above,
he cares for the lowly,
and the proud cannot hide from him.

7 Even when I am surrounded by troubles,
you keep me safe;
you oppose my angry enemies,
and save me by your power.
8 You will do everything you have promised me;
Lord, your love is constant forever.
Complete the work that you have begun.

God's Complete Knowledge and Care

139 Lord, you have examined me, and you know me.
2 You know everything I do;
from far away you understand all my thoughts.
3 You see me, whether I am working or resting;
you know all my actions.
4 Even before I speak
you already know what I will say.
5 You are all around me, on every side;
you protect me with your power.
6 Your knowledge of me is overwhelming;
it is too deep for me to understand.

7 Where could I go to escape from your
spirit?
Where could I get away from your pres-
ence?
8 If I went up to heaven, you would be
there;
if I lay down in the world of the dead,
you would be there.
9 If I flew away beyond the east,
or lived in the farthest place in the west,
10 you would be there to lead me,
you would be there to help me.
11 I could ask the darkness to hide me,
or the light around me to turn into
night,
12 but even the darkness is not dark for you,
and the night is as bright as the day.
Darkness and light are the same to you.

13 You created every part of me;
you put me together in my mother's
womb.
14 I praise you because you are to be feared;
all you do is strange and wonderful.
I know it with all my heart.
15 You saw my bones being formed,
carefully put together in my mother's
womb,
when I was growing there in secret.
16 You saw me before I was born.
The days that had been created for me
had all been recorded in your book,
before any of them had ever begun.
17 God, how difficult your thoughts are for
me;
how many of them there are!
18 If I counted them, they would be more
than the grains of sand.
When I awake, I am still with you.

19 God, how I wish you would kill the
wicked!

How I wish violent men would leave me
alone!
20 They say wicked things about you;
they speak evil things against your
name.[1]
21 Lord, how I hate those who hate you!
How I despise those who rebel against
you!
22 My hatred for them is complete;
I regard them as my enemies.

23 Examine me, God, and know my mind;
test me, and discover my thoughts.
24 Find out if there is any deceit in me,
and guide me in the eternal way.

A Prayer for Protection

140 Save me, Lord, from evil men;
keep me safe from violent men.
2 They are always plotting evil,
always stirring up quarrels.
3 Their tongues are like deadly snakes,
their words are like a cobra's poison.

4 Protect me, Lord, from the power of the
wicked;
keep me safe from violent men,
who plot my downfall.
5 Proud men have laid a trap for me;
they have spread a net of ropes,
and along the path they have set traps
to catch me.

6 I say to the Lord, "You are my God."
Hear my cry for help, Lord!
7 Lord, my God, my strong Savior,
you have protected me in battle.
8 Lord, don't give the wicked what they
want;
don't let their evil plots succeed!

[1] *Hebrew unclear.*

[9] Don't let my enemies be victorious;[f]
make their threats against me fall back
on them.
[10] May red-hot coals fall on them;
may they be thrown into a pit and never
get out.
[11] May those who accuse others falsely not
succeed;
may evil overtake the violent man and
destroy him.

[12] I know that you, Lord, defend the cause of
the poor,
and the rights of the needy.
[13] The righteous will praise you indeed;
they will live in your presence.

An Evening Prayer

141 I call to you, Lord; help me now!
Listen to me when I call to you.
[2] Receive my prayer as incense,
my uplifted hands as an evening sac-
rifice.

[3] Lord, place a guard at my mouth,
a sentry at the door of my lips.
[4] Keep me from wanting to do wrong,
or to join evil men in their wickedness.
May I never take part in their feasts!

[5] A good man may punish me and repri-
mand me in kindness,
but I will not let an evil man anoint my
head,
because I am always praying against his
evil deeds.
[6] When their rulers are thrown down on
rocky cliffs,

[f] Don't let my enemies be victorious; *Hebrew unclear.*

the people will admit that my words
were true.
7 Like wood that is split and chopped into
bits,
so their bones are scattered at the edge
of the grave.[k]

8 But I, Lord God, keep trusting in you;
I seek your protection;
don't let me die!
9 Protect me from the traps they have set
for me,
from the snares of those evildoers.
10 May the wicked fall into their own traps,
while I go by unharmed.

A Prayer for Help[l]

142 I call to the Lord for help;
I plead with him.
2 I bring him all my complaints;
I tell him all my troubles.
3 When I am ready to give up,
he knows what I should do.
In the path where I walk
my enemies have hidden a trap for me.
4 I look beside me and I see
that there is no one to help me;
there is no one to protect me;
no one cares for me.

5 Lord, I cry to you for help;
you, Lord, are my protector;
you are all I want in this life.
6 Listen to my cry for help,
because I am sunk in despair.
Save me from my enemies,
who are much stronger than I am.
7 Rescue me from my trouble;

[k] *Verses 5–7 in Hebrew are unclear.* [l] *Hebrew title:* A prayer of David when he was in the cave.

then in the meeting of your people I will
praise you,
because you have been good to me.

A Prayer for Help

143 Lord, hear my prayer,
listen to my plea!
You are righteous and faithful,
so answer me!
2 Don't put me, your servant, on trial;
no one is innocent in your sight.

3 My enemy has persecuted me,
and completely defeated me.
He has put me in a dark prison,
and I am like those who died long ago.
4 So I am ready to give up;
I am in deep despair.

5 I remember the days gone by;
I think about all that you have done,
I bring to mind all your deeds.
6 I lift up my hands to you in prayer;
like dry ground my soul thirsts for you.

7 Answer me now, Lord!
I have lost all hope!
Don't hide yourself from me,
or I will be among those who go down
to the land of the dead.
8 I trust in you;
in the morning remind me of your constant love.
My prayers go up to you;
show me the way I should go.

9 I go to you for protection, Lord;
rescue me from my enemies.
10 You are my God;
teach me to do your will.
May your spirit be good to me
and guide me on a safe path.

11 Save me, Lord, as you have promised;
in your goodness, rescue me from my troubles!
12 In your love for me, kill my enemies,
and destroy all my oppressors,
because I am your servant.

A King Thanks God for Victory

144 Praise the Lord, my protector;
he trains me for battle,
and prepares me for war.
2 He is my protector[m] and defender,
my shelter and Savior,
in whom I trust for safety.
He subdues the nations under me.

3 Lord, what is man, that you notice him;
mere man, that you pay attention to him?
4 He is like a puff of wind;
his days are like a passing shadow.

5 Lord, pull back the sky, and come down;
touch the mountains, and they will pour out smoke.
6 Send flashes of lightning, and scatter your enemies;
shoot your arrows, and send them running!
7 Reach down from above,
pull me out of the deep water, and save me;
save me from the power of foreigners,
8 who never tell the truth,
and lie even under oath.

9 I will sing you a new song, God;
I will play the harp and sing to you.
10 You give victory to kings,

[m]protector *(as in Ps. 18.2 and 2 Sam. 22.2); Hebrew* love.

and rescue your servant David.
11 Save me from my cruel enemies,
rescue me from the power of foreigners,
who never tell the truth,
and lie even under oath.

12 May our sons in their youth
be like plants that grow up strong.
May our daughters be like statues,
which adorn the corners of a palace.
13 May our barns be filled
with crops of every kind.
May the sheep in our fields
bear young by the tens of thousands.
14 May our cattle reproduce plentifully,
without miscarriage or loss.
May there be no cries of distress in our streets!

15 Happy is the nation of whom this is true;
happy are the people whose God is the Lord!

A Hymn of Praise

145 I will proclaim your greatness, my God and king;
I will thank you forever and ever.
2 Every day I will thank you;
I will praise you forever and ever.
3 The Lord is great, and must be highly praised;
his greatness is beyond understanding.

4 What you have done will be praised from one generation to the next;
they will proclaim your mighty acts.
5 Men will speak of your glory and majesty,
and I will meditate on your wonderful deeds.

6 Men will speak of your mighty acts,
and I will proclaim your greatness.
7 They will tell about all your goodness,
and sing about your kindness.

8 The Lord is loving and merciful,
slow to become angry and full of constant love.
9 He is good to everyone
and has compassion on all he made.

10 All your creatures, Lord, will praise you,
and your people will give you thanks!
11 They will speak of the glory of your kingdom,
and tell of your might,
12 so that all men will know your mighty acts,
and the glorious majesty of your kingdom.
13 Your kingdom is eternal,
and you are king forever.

The Lord is faithful to his promises,
and good in all he does.
14 He helps all who are in trouble;
he raises all who are humbled.
15 All living things look hopefully to him,
and he gives them food when they need it.
16 He gives them enough
and satisfies the needs of all.
17 The Lord is righteous in all he does,
merciful in all his acts.
18 He is near to all who call to him,
who call to him with sincerity.
19 He supplies the needs of all who fear him;
he hears their cry and saves them.
20 He protects all who love him,
but he will destroy all the wicked.

21 I will always praise the Lord;
let all creatures praise his holy name
forever!

In Praise of God the Savior

146 Praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord, my soul!
2 I will praise him as long as I live;
I will sing to my God all my life.

3 Don't put your trust in human leaders,
or anyone else who cannot save you.
4 When they die they return to the soil;
on that day all their plans come to an
end.

5 Happy is the man who has the God of
Jacob to help him,
and depends on the Lord his God,
6 who created heaven, earth, and sea,
and all that is in them.
He always keeps his promises;
7 he judges in favor of the oppressed
and gives food to the hungry.

The Lord sets prisoners free
8 and gives sight to the blind.
He raises all who are humbled;
he loves his righteous people.
9 He protects the foreigners who live in the
land;
he helps widows and orphans,
but ruins the plans of the wicked.

10 The Lord will be king forever!
Your God, Zion, will reign for all time!

Praise the Lord!

In Praise of God the Almighty

147 Praise the Lord!

It is good to sing praise to our God;
it is pleasant and right to praise him.
2 The Lord is restoring Jerusalem;
he is bringing back the exiles.
3 He heals the brokenhearted,
and bandages their wounds.

4 He has determined the number of the stars
and calls each one by name.
5 Great and almighty is our Lord;
his knowledge cannot be measured.
6 He raises the humble,
but crushes the wicked to the ground.

7 Sing hymns of praise to the Lord;
play music to our God on the harp.
8 He spreads clouds over the sky;
he provides rain for the earth,
and makes grass grow on the hills.
9 He gives animals their food,
and feeds the young ravens when they call.

10 His pleasure is not in strong horses,
nor his delight in brave soldiers;
11 but he takes pleasure in those who fear him,
in those who trust in his constant love.

12 Praise the Lord, Jerusalem!
Praise your God, Zion!
13 He keeps your gates strong;
he blesses your people.
14 He keeps your borders safe
and satisfies you with the best wheat.

15 He gives an order,
and it comes quickly to the earth.
16 He sends snow as thick as wool,
and scatters frost like dust.
17 He sends hail like gravel;
no one can endure the cold he sends!
18 Then he gives a command, and melts the ice,
he sends the wind, and the water flows.

19 He gives his message to Jacob,
his instructions and laws to Israel.
20 He has not done this for other nations;
they do not know his laws.

Praise the Lord!

A Call for the Universe to Praise God

148 Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord from heaven,
you that live in the heights above!
2 Praise him, all his angels,
all his heavenly armies!

3 Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, shining stars!
4 Praise him, highest heavens,
and the waters above the sky!

5 Let them all praise the name of the Lord!
He commanded, and they were created;
6 by his command they were fixed in their places forever,
and they cannot disobey.

7 Praise the Lord from the earth,
sea monsters and all ocean depths;
8 lightning and hail, snow and clouds,
strong winds that obey his command!

9 Praise him, hills and mountains,
fruit trees and forests;
10 all animals, tame and wild,
reptiles and birds!

11 Praise him, kings and all peoples,
princes and all other rulers;
12 young men and girls,
old people and children also!

13 Let them all praise the name of the Lord.
His name is greater than all others;
his glory is above earth and heaven!
14 He made his nation strong,
so that all his people praise him,
the people of Israel, so dear to him!

Praise the Lord!

A Hymn of Praise

149 Praise the Lord!

Sing a new song to the Lord;
praise him in the meeting of his faithful people!
2 Be glad, Israel, because of your creator;
rejoice, people of Zion, because of your king!
3 Praise his name with dancing;
play drums and harps in praise of him.

4 The Lord takes pleasure in his people;
he honors the humble with victory.
5 Let God's people rejoice in their triumph,
and sing joyfully at their feasts.
6 Let them shout aloud as they praise God,
with their sharp swords in their hands,
7 to defeat the nations,
and to punish the peoples;

[8] to tie up their kings in chains,
their leaders in chains of iron;
[9] to punish the nations as God has commanded.
This is the victory of God's people!

Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord!

150

Praise the Lord!

Praise God in his temple!
Praise his strength in heaven!
[2] Praise him for the mighty things he has done!
Praise his supreme greatness!

[3] Praise him with trumpets!
Praise him with harps and lyres!
[4] Praise him with drums and dancing!
Praise him with harps and flutes!
[5] Praise him with cymbals!
Praise him with loud cymbals!
[6] Praise the Lord, all living creatures!

Praise the Lord!

WORD LIST

OTHER READINGS AND RENDERINGS

WORD LIST

A

Aaron The brother of Moses, who was chosen by God to be the chief priest in Israel (Exodus 28.1—30.10).

Abyss A very deep hole in the earth where, according to ancient Jewish teaching, the evil spirits are imprisoned until their final punishment.

Achaia A Roman province covering what is now the southern half of Greece (the northern half of modern Greece was known as Macedonia). In this translation "Greece" is used for Achaia and also for *Hellas* (Acts 20.2), which was the native Greek name corresponding to the Roman name Achaia. The capital city of the province was Corinth; other cities in Achaia mentioned in the New Testament are Cenchreae and Athens.

Agate A semiprecious stone of varying colors.

Agrippa Herod Agrippa II, great-grandson of Herod the Great, was king of Chalcis, a small country north of Palestine, and ruler of nearby territories. Paul made his defense before him and his sister Bernice (Acts 25.13—26.32).

Alabaster A soft stone, of light creamy color, from which vases and jars were made.

Aloes A sweet-smelling substance, derived from a plant, which the Jews spread on the cloths they wrapped around a body to be buried.

Alpha The first letter of the Greek alphabet. The expression "I am the Alpha and the Omega" (Revelation 1.8; 21.6; 22.13) means "I am the first and the last."

Altar The place where sacrifices were offered to God.

Amen A Hebrew word which means "it is so" or "may it be so." It can also be translated "certainly," "truly," or "surely." In Revelation 3.14 it is used as a title for Christ.

Amethyst A semiprecious stone, usually purple or violet in color.

Ancestor Someone who lived in the past, from whom a person is descended.

Anoint To pour or rub oil on someone in order to honor him, or select him for some special work. The word is also used in a figurative sense. "The Anointed One" is the title of the one whom God chose and appointed to be

Savior and Lord. Oil was also used by the Jews on a sick person to make him well; it was also used on a dead body to prepare it for burial.

Apostle One of the group of twelve men whom Jesus chose to be his followers and helpers. The word means "messenger," and is also used in the New Testament of Paul and of other Christian workers.

Areopagus A hill in Athens where the city council met. For this reason the council itself was called Areopagus, even after it no longer met on the hill.

Aretas King of the country of Nabatea, which was to the south and east of Palestine.

Ark (1) The vessel built by Noah in which he, his family, and the animals survived the Flood (Genesis 6.9–8.19). (2) The wooden chest, covered with gold, in which were kept the two stone tablets on which were written the ten commandments. Other sacred objects of the Jews were also kept in the ark, which was placed in the tabernacle (Exodus 25.10–22; Hebrews 9.4–5).

Armageddon The place mentioned in Revelation 16.16; it is not certain whether the name refers to an actual place ("the hill of Megiddo"), or is used as a symbol.

Artemis The Greek name of an ancient goddess of fertility, worshiped especially in Asia Minor.

Asia A Roman province in the western part of what was later known as Asia Minor, and is today part of the country of Turkey. Besides the seven cities of Asia listed in the book of Revelation (1.4, 11; 2.1–3.22), other cities in the province mentioned in the New Testament are Colossae, Hierapolis, and Miletus. The capital of the province was Ephesus.

Atonement, Day of The most important of the Jewish holy days, when the High Priest would offer sacrifice for the sins of the people of Israel (Leviticus 16.29–34). It was held on the 10th day of the month Tishri (around October 1).

Augustus One of the titles of Gaius Octavius, who was Roman Emperor from 27 B.C. to A.D. 14 (Luke 2.1).

B

Baal The name of the god worshiped by the ancient people of Canaan.

Babylon The capital city of the ancient land of Babylonia, east of Palestine, on the rivers Tigris and Euphrates. In 1 Peter 5.13 and Revelation the name Babylon probably refers to the city of Rome.

Balaam A native of Pethor, near the Euphrates river, who was asked by Balak, king of Moab, to curse the people of Israel. Instead, Balaam obeyed God's command and blessed Israel (Numbers 22.1—24.25; Deuteronomy 23.3–6; Joshua 13.22).

Balak The king of Moab, a country on the southeast side of the Dead Sea. He led the people of Israel to worship idols (Numbers 22.1—24.25; Revelation 2.14).

Bastard A person born of parents who are not legally married.

Beelzebul The name given to the Devil as the chief of the evil spirits.

Bernice Sister of King Agrippa II (Acts 25.13—26.32).

Beryl A semiprecious stone, usually green or bluish green in color.

Blasphemy An evil thing said against God.

Breastplate Part of a soldier's armor, made of leather or metal, which covered the breast, and sometimes the back, to protect him from the enemy's attack.

Brier A small plant with thorns on its stems and branches.

C

Caesar The title given to the Roman Emperor.

Carnelian A semiprecious stone, usually red in color.

Cassia A sweet-smelling substance, derived from a certain plant, which was used to perfume garments.

Census The registration of citizens and their property, to determine how much tax they had to pay.

Chalcedony A semiprecious stone, usually milky or gray in color.

Cherubim Imaginary heavenly creatures, thought of as carrying God or supporting the throne on which he sat.

Christ Originally a title, the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word "Messiah." It means "the anointed one." Jesus is called the Christ because he is the one whom God chose and sent as Savior and Lord.

Cinnamon The sweet-smelling inner bark of a certain tree, used as a spice on food.

Circumcise To cut off the foreskin of a Jewish baby boy as a sign of God's covenant with the people of Israel (Genesis 17.9–14).

Claudius Roman Emperor A.D. 41–54 (Acts 11.28; 18.2).

Convert A person who is converted, or turned, from one belief or faith to another.

Council The supreme religious court of the Jews, composed of seventy leaders of the Jewish people and presided over by the High Priest.

Covenant The agreement that God made with Abraham (Genesis 17.1–8), and later with the people of Israel (Deuteronomy 29.10–15).

Covenant box A small wooden chest, covered with gold, in which were kept the two stone tablets on which the ten commandments were written.

Cummin A small garden plant whose seeds are ground up and used for seasoning foods.

D

Dalmatia The southern half of the province of Illyricum.

Dedication, Feast of The Jewish feast, lasting eight days, which celebrated the restoration and rededication of the altar in the temple by the Jewish patriot Judas Maccabeus, in 165 B.C. The feast began on the 25th day of the month Chislev (around December 10).

Defile To make dirty, or impure. Certain foods and practices were prohibited by the Jewish Law because they were thought to make a person spiritually or ceremonially unclean. In this condition such a person could not take part in the public worship until he had performed certain rituals which would remove the defilement.

Demon An evil spirit with the power to harm people, that was regarded as a messenger and servant of the Devil.

Descendant A person who is related by family line to someone who lived a long time before him.

Dill A small garden plant whose seeds are ground up and used for seasoning foods.

Disciple A person who follows and learns from someone else. The word is used in the New Testament of the followers of John the Baptist and Paul; it is especially used of the followers of Jesus, particularly of the twelve apostles.

Dough Flour mixed with water to be baked into bread.

Dragon An imaginary beast, thought to be like a huge lizard. It is also called a serpent, and appears in the Bible as a figure of the Devil (Revelation 12.3—13.4; 20.2–3).

Drusilla Sister of King Agrippa II and wife of the Roman governor Felix (Acts 24.24).

E

Elders Three different groups in the New Testament are called elders: (1) in the Gospels, the elders are respected Jewish religious leaders, some of whom were members of the supreme Council; (2) in Acts 11—21 and the Epistles, the elders are Christian church officers who had general responsibility for the work of the church (the author of 2 and 3 John identifies himself as "the Elder"); (3) in Revelation, the 24 elders are part of God's court in heaven, perhaps as representatives of God's people.

Elijah The Old Testament prophet who was expected to appear to announce the coming of the Messiah (Malachi 4.5–6; Matthew 17.9–13).

Emerald A very valuable stone, green in color.

Epicureans Those who followed the teaching of Epicurus (died 270 B.C.), who taught that happiness is the highest good in life.

Epileptic A person who suffers from a nervous disease which causes convulsions and fainting.

Eunuch A man who has been made physically incapable of having normal sexual relations.

F

Fast To go without food for a while as a religious duty.

Felix The Roman governor of Judea A.D. 52–60, before whom Paul defended himself (Acts 23.24—24.27).

Festus The Roman governor of Judea A.D. 60–62, before whom Paul defended himself and made his appeal to the Roman Emperor (Acts 25.1—26.32).

Foal The young of an animal of the horse family.

Frankincense A valuable incense, suitable for a gift.

G

Gabriel One of God's chief angels, who was sent to Zechariah, father of John the Baptist (Luke 1.11–20), and to Mary, mother of Jesus (Luke 1.26–38).

Galatia A Roman province in the eastern part of what was later known as Asia Minor, and is today part of the country of Turkey. The cities of Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe were in the province of Galatia.

Gall A very bitter liquid made from a certain plant.

Gallio The Roman governor of Greece A.D. 51–52 (Acts 18.12–17).

Gamaliel One of the greatest Jewish teachers, a member of the supreme Council of the Jews (Acts 5.34–40), who had been Paul's teacher (Acts 22.3).

Generation The average period, about 30 years in length, from the time a man becomes an adult to the time his son becomes an adult.

Gennesaret Another name for Lake Galilee (Luke 5.1).

Gentile A person who is not a Jew.

Gomorrah A city near the Dead Sea which God destroyed by fire because of the great wickedness of its people (Genesis 19.24–28).

Greece See Achaia.

H

Hades The Greek name, in the New Testament, for the world of the dead; the same as Sheol in the Old Testament.

Hermes The name of a Greek god, who served as messenger of the gods.

Herod (1) Herod the Great (Matthew 2.1–22; Luke 1.5) was king of all the country of the Jews 37–4 B.C. He was responsible for the killing of the baby boys in Bethlehem soon after Jesus was born. (2) Herod (whose full name was Herod Antipas) was ruler of Galilee 4 B.C.–A.D. 39 (Matthew 14.1–10; Mark 6.14–27; Luke 3.1, 19–20; 9.7–9; 13.31; 23.6–12; Acts 4.27; 13.1). He was son of Herod the Great, and although called a king (Mark 6.14), he was not a king as his father had been. He was responsible for the death of John the Baptist. (3) Herod (whose full name was Herod Agrippa I) was ruler of all the land of the Jews, with the title of king, A.D. 41–44 (Acts 12.1–23). He was grandson of Herod the Great. He put the apostle James to death and arrested Peter.

Herodias The wife of Herod Antipas, ruler of Galilee. Before marrying Herod she had been the wife of his half-

brother Philip (Matthew 14.3–12; Mark 6.17–28; Luke 3.19).

Herod's party A political party composed of Jews who favored one of the descendants of Herod the Great to rule over them instead of the Roman governor.

High Priest The priest who occupied the highest office in the Jewish priestly system and was president of the supreme Council of the Jews. Once a year (on the Day of Atonement) he would enter the holiest part of the temple and offer sacrifice for himself and for the sins of the people of Israel.

Homosexual A man who has sexual relations with another man.

Hyssop A small bushy plant, used in ceremonies of sprinkling.

I

Illyricum A province on the coast of the Adriatic Sea, north of the province of Macedonia, in what is now Yugoslavia.

Incense Material which is burned in order to produce a pleasant smell.

Inn A house where travelers can buy food and lodging.

J

Jasper A semiprecious stone of varying colors. The jasper mentioned in the Bible was probably green.

Jesse The father of King David, one of the ancestors of Jesus (Matthew 1.5–6; Acts 13.22; Romans 15.12).

K

Kingdom of God, Kingdom of heaven The titles used to describe God's ruling over the world as king. There is no difference between the two titles, both of which refer primarily to God's possession and exercise of his power, not to a place or a time in history. This Kingdom is spoken of as being already present and also as coming in the future.

L

Lady The recipient of 2 John (verses 1, 5), probably a church, not an individual. Under this interpretation, her "children" (verses 1, 4) are the church members, and her "Sister" (verse 13) is also a church to which the writer belongs.

Law The name the Jews applied to the first five books of the Old Testament, also called the books of Moses. Sometimes the name is also used in a more general sense of the whole Old Testament.

Leper Someone suffering from a disease called leprosy. It is probable that in the Bible the word translated "leprosy" had a wider range of meaning than it does now, and was used as the name of several other skin diseases as well.

Leviathan An imaginary monster, thought to be a huge sea creature with many heads.

Levite A member of the priestly tribe of Levi, who had the duty of helping in the services in the temple (Numbers 3.1–13).

Locust A grasshopper, a winged insect extremely harmful to plants; locusts fly in huge swarms and eat crops and other plants.

Lot The nephew of Abraham who escaped with his daughters from the city of Sodom when it was destroyed by God. Lot's wife, however, did not escape (Genesis 19.12–29; Luke 17.28–32; 2 Peter 2.6–8).

Lyre A stringed musical instrument, like a harp.

M

Macedonia A Roman province covering what is now the northern half of Greece. Its capital city was Thessalonica. Other cities in the province mentioned in the New Testament are Neapolis, Philippi, Amphipolis, Apollonia, and Berea.

Magdalene Mary Magdalene, a follower of Jesus, was one of those to whom Jesus appeared after he was raised from death (Mark 15.40–47; Luke 8.2; John 20.1–18). Her name indicates that she was born in Magdala, a town on the west side of Lake Galilee.

Manna The food of the Israelites during their travels in the wilderness. It was small, white, and flaky, and looked like small seeds (Exodus 16.14–21; Numbers 11.7–9).

Messiah The title (meaning "the anointed one") given to the promised Savior whose coming was promised by the Hebrew prophets; the same as "Christ."

Michael One of God's chief angels (Jude 9; Revelation 12.7).

Mint A small garden plant, whose leaves are used for seasoning foods.

Moloch One of the gods of the ancient people of Canaan.

Mustard A large plant which grows from a very small seed. The seeds may be ground into powder and used as spice on food.

Myrrh The hardened sap of a tree, with a pleasant smell, and suitable for a gift (Matthew 2.11; Revelation 18.13). It served also as a medicine (Mark 15.23), and was also used by the Jews in preparing bodies for burial (John 19.39).

N

Nard A plant from which an expensive perfume was made.

Nazarene Someone from the town of Nazareth. The name was used as a title for Jesus, and also as a name for the early Christians (Acts 24.5).

Nicolaitans A group referred to in Revelation 2.6, 15 whose teachings and actions are condemned. They apparently practiced idolatry and immorality, but nothing definite is known as to when, where, and by whom the group was started.

Nineveh The ancient capital of Assyria, on the east side of the river Tigris, where the prophet Jonah preached (Jonah 3.1–10; Luke 11.30, 32).

Noah The Old Testament patriarch who built an ark in which he, his family, and the animals were saved from the flood that God sent on the earth (Genesis 6.5–9.28).

O

Omega The last letter of the Greek alphabet. The expression "I am the Alpha and the Omega" (Revelation 1.8; 21.6; 22.13) means "I am the first and the last."

Onyx A semiprecious stone of varying colors.

Outcasts In the Gospels this name, which in many translations appears as "sinners," refers to those Jews who did not obey all the rules laid down by the religious leaders. The Pharisees were especially strict about foods that should not be eaten and about relationships with people who were not Jews. The leaders of the Jews despised these people and condemned Jesus for associating with them (Mark 2.15–17; Luke 7.34; 15.1–2).

P

Parable A story used by Jesus to teach spiritual lessons.

Paradise A name for heaven (Luke 23.43; 2 Corinthians 12.3).

Paralytic Someone who suffers from a disease that prevents him from moving part or all of his body.

Parchment The skin of an animal, usually a sheep or a goat, which was prepared to be written on.

Passover, Feast of The Jewish feast, on the 14th day of the month Nisan (around April 1), which celebrated the deliverance of the ancient Hebrews from their captivity in Egypt. The angel of death killed the firstborn in the Egyptian homes but "passed over" the Hebrew homes (Exodus 12.23–27).

Patriarchs The famous ancestors of the Jewish race, such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with whom God made his covenants.

Pentecost, Day of The Jewish feast of wheat harvest, on the 6th day of the month Sivan (around May 20). The name Pentecost (meaning "fiftieth") comes from the fact that the feast was held 50 days after Passover.

Pervert One who commits unnatural sexual acts.

Pharaoh The title of the kings of ancient Egypt. Two different kings of Egypt are mentioned in the New Testament: the one who ruled during the time of Joseph, the son of Jacob (Acts 7.10–13; Genesis 40.1—50.26), and the one who ruled during the time of Moses (Acts 7.21; Romans 9.17; Hebrews 11.24; Exodus 1.8—14.31).

Pharisees A Jewish religious party. They were strict in obeying the Law of Moses and other regulations which had been added to it through the centuries.

Pilate Pontius Pilate was the Roman governor of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea, A.D. 26–36 (Mark 15.1–15; Luke 3.1; Acts 3.13; 1 Timothy 6.13).

Potter A man who makes pots and other vessels out of clay.

Preparation, Day of The sixth day of the week, on which the Jews made the required preparations to observe the Sabbath day.

Prophet A man who proclaims God's message to men. (1) The term usually refers to the Old Testament prophets (Matthew 5.12, 17; 13.17), such as Isaiah (Matthew 3.3),

Jeremiah (Matthew 2.17), Jonah (Matthew 12.39), Daniel (Matthew 24.15), and Joel (Acts 2.16). (2) The term also refers to prophets in the Church (Acts 13.1; 1 Corinthians 12.28–29; Ephesians 4.11). (3) The term is applied also to John the Baptist (Matthew 11.9; 14.5; Luke 1.76), and to Jesus (Matthew 21.11, 46; Luke 7.16; 24.19; John 9.17). (4) "The Prophet" promised by Moses was expected to appear and announce the coming of the Messiah (Deuteronomy 18.15, 18; John 6.14; 7.40; Acts 3.22–23).

Prune To cut the branches off a fruit tree in order to make it bear more and better fruit.

Q

Quartz A semiprecious stone of varying colors, usually white.

R

Rabbi A Hebrew word which means "my teacher."

Rahab An imaginary monster, thought to be like a huge lizard.

Rephan The name of an ancient god that was worshiped as the ruler of the planet Saturn.

Ritual An established form for conducting a religious service.

Rue A small garden plant whose leaves are used for seasoning foods.

S

Sabbath The seventh day of the Jewish week, the holy day on which no work was permitted.

Sadducees A small Jewish religious party, composed largely of priests. They based their beliefs primarily on the first five books of the Old Testament, and so differed in several matters of belief and practice from the larger party of the Pharisees.

Samaritan A native of Samaria, the province between Judea and Galilee. There was much hatred between the Jews and the Samaritans, because of differences in politics, race, customs, and religion.

Sanctuary A building dedicated to the worship of God. Sometimes the word may refer to the central place of worship, and not to the whole building.

Sapphire A very valuable stone, usually blue in color.

Saul (1) The first king of Israel (1 Samuel 13–31, Acts 13.21); (2) the Hebrew name of the apostle Paul (Acts 7.58; 8.1, 3; 9.1–30; 11.25–30; 12.25; 13.1–9).

Scepter A short wooden or metal rod carried by kings as a symbol of their authority.

Scorpion A small creature, which has eight legs and a long tail with a poisonous sting. It can inflict a very painful, and sometimes fatal, wound.

Scriptures In the New Testament the word refers to the collected body of Jewish sacred writings, known to us as the Old Testament. Various names are used: the Law (or the Law of Moses) and the prophets (Matthew 5.17; 7.12; Luke 2.22; 24.44; Acts 13.15; 28.23); the Holy Scriptures (Romans 1.2; 2 Timothy 3.15); the old covenant (2 Corinthians 3.14). The singular "scripture" refers to a single passage of the Old Testament.

Serpent A name given to the dragon, which appears in the Bible as a figure of the Devil (Revelation 12.3–17; 20.2–3).

Sheepfold An enclosure where sheep were kept, usually at night, to protect them from wild animals and thieves.

Shepherd A man, or boy, who takes care of sheep.

Sickle A tool consisting of a curved metal blade and a wooden handle, used for cutting wheat and other crops.

Sodom A city near the Dead Sea which God destroyed by fire because of the great wickedness of its people (Genesis 19.24–28).

Solomon's Porch A covered court on the east side of the temple in Jerusalem.

Son of David A title which the Jews used of the expected Messiah as the descendant and successor of King David.

Son of Man The title used by Jesus to refer to himself as the one chosen by God to be the Savior (Mark 10.45). As used by Jesus, this title emphasized both his present lowly condition (Mark 8.31; Luke 9.58) and his future glory (Matthew 25.31; Mark 8.38).

Spice One of several pleasant-smelling vegetable products which were used by the Jews in preparing bodies for burial.

Stoics Those who followed the teachings of the philosopher Zeno (died 265 B.C.), who taught that happiness is to be found in being free from pleasure and pain.

Sulfur A yellow substance which burns with great heat and produces an unpleasant smell.

Synagogue The place where Jews met every Sabbath day for their public worship; it was also used as a social center and as a school for Jewish children during week days.

T

Tabernacle A large tent-like construction, described in detail in Exodus 26, where God had his dwelling among his people.

Tabernacles, Feast of The Jewish feast, lasting eight days, which in New Testament times celebrated the time when the ancient Hebrews lived in tents during their travels through the wilderness. In Old Testament times it was also known as the Feast of Ingathering (Exodus 23.16; Leviticus 23.33–43). The feast began on the 15th day of the month Tishri (around October 6).

Tambourine A small drum.

Teachers of the Law Men who taught and interpreted the teachings of the Old Testament, especially the first five books.

Tenant A man who raises crops on land owned by someone else, and turns over a large part of the harvest to the owner to pay for the use of his land.

Ten Towns A group of ten Gentile towns, most of which were to the east and southeast of Lake Galilee.

Theophilus The one to whom the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts (Luke 1.1; Acts 1.1) are dedicated. Nothing is known about him, and it is not certain that he is a real person; the name means "God's friend," and may designate the Christian readers of the books.

Tiberias Another name of Lake Galilee (John 6.1; 21.1). The town of Tiberias (John 6.23) was on the west side of Lake Galilee.

Tiberius Roman Emperor A.D. 14–37. It was in the 15th year of his rule (about A.D. 29) that John the Baptist began his work (Luke 3.1).

Topaz A semiprecious stone, usually yellow in color.

Turquoise A semiprecious stone, blue or bluish green in color.

U

Unleavened Bread, Feast of The Jewish feast, lasting seven days after Passover, which also celebrated the deliverance of the ancient Hebrews from Egypt. The name came from the practice of not using leaven (or yeast) in making bread during that week (Exodus 12.14–20). It was held from the 15th to the 22nd day of the month Nisan (around the first week of April).

V

Vow A strong declaration, or promise, usually made while calling upon God to punish the speaker if the statement is not true or the promise is not kept.

W

Winnowing shovel A tool like a shovel, or large fork, used to separate the wheat from the chaff.

Wreath Flowers or leaves arranged in a circle, to be placed on a person's head. In ancient times a wreath of leaves was the prize given to winners in athletic contests.

Y

Yeast A substance, also called leaven, which is added to flour of wheat or barley to make it rise before being baked into bread.

Yoke A heavy bar of wood which is fitted over the necks of two oxen in order for them to pull a plow or a cart. The word is used figuratively to describe the lessons that a teacher passes on to his pupils.

Z

Zeus The name of the supreme god of the Greeks.

Zion The name of a hill in the city of Jerusalem; the name is often used to mean Jerusalem itself.

OTHER READINGS AND RENDERINGS

OTHER READINGS AND RENDERINGS

THERE are many places in the New Testament where the various Greek manuscripts, and other textual sources, have different texts: these are called *variant readings*, and some of the more important ones are listed below. There are also many passages in the Greek New Testament which may be understood and translated in two or more different ways: these are called *alternative renderings*, and some of them are included in this list.

MATTHEW

5.18 until the end of all things: *or* until all it teaches comes true

5.22 is angry: *some mss. add* without cause

6.11 we need: *or* for today; *or* for tomorrow

6.27 live a few more years: *or* make himself a foot taller

11.12 has suffered violent attacks: *or* has been coming violently

12.31 any evil thing they say: *or* any evil thing they say against God

16.2b–3 *Some mss. omit the words in verse 2 after* But Jesus answered, *and all of verse 3.*

18.14 your Father: *some mss. have* my Father

18.15 *Some mss. omit* against you

21.3 The Master: *or* Their owner

24.33 the time is near, ready to begin: *or* he is near, ready to come

24.36 *Some mss. omit* nor the Son

24.51 cut him to pieces: *or* throw him out

26.50 Be quick about it, friend! *or* Why are you here, friend?

MARK

1.1 *Some mss. omit* the Son of God

1.4 John appeared . . . baptizing people and preaching: *some mss. have* John the Baptist appeared . . . preaching

1.41 pity: *some mss. have* anger

3.28 evil things they may say: *or* evil things they may say against God

5.36 paid no attention to: *or* overheard

6.22 The daughter of Herodias: *some mss. have* His daughter Herodias

6.48 pass them by: *or* join them

7.4 anything that comes from the market unless they wash it first: *or* anything after they come from the market unless they wash themselves first

11.3 The Master: *or* Its owner

13.29 the time is near, ready to begin: *or* he is near, ready to come

LUKE

6.10 said: *some mss. add* angrily

8.43 *Some mss. omit* she had spent all she had on doctors

9.54 destroy them: *some mss. add* as Elijah did

9.55 rebuked them: *some mss. add* and said, "You don't know what kind of Spirit you belong to; for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them."

10.21 by the Holy Spirit: *some mss. have* by the Spirit; *others have* in his spirit
12.25 live a few more years: *or* make himself a foot taller
12.46 cut him to pieces: *or* throw him out
17.21 within: *or* among
18.11 stood apart by himself and prayed: *some mss. have* stood up and said this prayer to himself
23.34 *Some mss. omit* Jesus said . . . they are doing."
24.12 *Some mss. omit this verse.*
24.36 *Some mss. omit* and said to them, "Peace be with you."
24.40 *Some mss. omit this verse.*
24.51 *Some mss. omit* and was taken up into heaven.

JOHN

1.3–4 The Word was the source of life: *or* What was made had life in union with the Word
1.18 The only One, who is the same as God and: *some mss. have* The only Son, who
3.3 again: *or* from above
3.7 again: *or* from above
5.2 by the Sheep Gate, a pool with five porches: *or* by the Sheep Pool, a place with five porches
6.32 What Moses gave you was not the bread from heaven: *or* Moses did not give you the bread from heaven
7.8 I am not going: *some mss. have* I am not yet going
7.37–38 *Jesus' words may be translated:* "Whoever is thirsty should come to me, and whoever believes in me should drink. As the scripture says, 'Streams of living water will pour out from his heart.'"
7.52 no prophet ever comes: *one ms. has* the Prophet will not come
8.1–11 *some mss. omit this section; others place it after John 21.24; others place it after Luke 21.38; one ms. places it after John 7.36.*
8.25 What I have told you from the very beginning: *or* Why should I speak to you at all?
8.39 If you really were . . . you would do: *some mss. have* If you are . . . do
8.57 you have seen Abraham?: *some mss. have* Abraham has seen you?
10.16 they will become: *some mss. have* there will be
10.29 What my Father has given me is greater: *some mss. have* My Father, who gave them to me, is greater
13.10 *Some mss. omit* except for his feet
14.1 Believe: *or* You believe
14.2 *This verse may be translated:* There are many rooms in my Father's house; if it were not so would I tell you that I am going to prepare a place for you?
14.7 Now that you have known me . . . you will know: *some mss. have* If you had known me . . . you would know
16.23 the Father will give you whatever you ask of him in my name: *some mss. have* if you ask the Father for anything, he will give it to you in my name
17.11 Keep them safe by the power of your name, the name you gave me: *some mss. have* By the power of your name keep safe those you have given me
17.12 I kept them safe by the power of your name, the name you gave me: *some mss. have* by the power of your name I kept safe those you have given me
20.31 you may believe: *some mss. have* you may keep on believing

ACTS

3.22 just as he sent me: *or* like me
4.1 priests: *some mss. have* chief priests
7.37 just as he sent me: *or* like me
7.46 a house for the God: *some mss. have* a dwelling place for the house
8.26 This road is no longer used: *or* This is the desert road.
10.19 Three: *one ms. has* Two; *other mss. have* Some
12.25 from: *some mss. have* to
13.18 endured: *some mss. have* took care of
16.8 traveled right on through: *or* passed by
16.12 a city of the first district of Macedonia: *some mss. have* the main city of the district of Macedonia; *or* the main city of that district in Macedonia
19.9 every day: *some mss. add* from 11:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M.
19.21 Paul made up his mind: *or* Paul, led by the Spirit, decided
20.7 Saturday: *or* Sunday
20.28 God: *some mss. have* the Lord
20.28 the death of his own Son: *or* his own death
21.16 and took us to the house of the man we were going to stay with: *or* bringing with them the man at whose house we were going to stay
27.37 two hundred and seventy-six: *some mss. have* two hundred and seventy-five; *others have* seventy-six; *others have* about seventy-six

ROMANS

1.17 put right with God through faith shall live: *or* put right with God shall live through faith
5.1 we have peace: *some mss. have* let us have peace
5.2 We rejoice: *or* Let us rejoice
5.3 we also rejoice: *or* let us also rejoice
8.2 me: *some mss. have* you
8.10 the Spirit is life for you: *or* your spirit is alive
8.28 in all things God works for good with those who love him: *some mss. have* all things work for good for those who love God
9.5 May God, who rules over all, be praised forever: *or* And may he, who is God ruling over all, be praised forever
12.16 accept humble duties: *or* make friends with the lowly

1 CORINTHIANS

2.1 secret truth: *some mss. have* testimony
2.13 to those who have the Spirit: *or* with words given by the Spirit
7.36–38 The man *and* the girl *in this passage may be* a man *and* his daughter, *instead of* an engaged couple who have decided not to marry
13.3 to be burned: *some mss. have* in order to boast
15.19 If our hope in Christ is good for this life only, and no more: *or* If all we have in this life is our hope in Christ

2 CORINTHIANS

1.12 frankness: *some mss. have* holiness
3.16 *This verse may be translated:* But it is removed whenever a man turns to the Lord.
5.19 God was making friends of all men through Christ: *or* God was in Christ making friends of all men

GALATIANS

3.11 put right with God through faith shall live: *or* put right

with God shall live through faith

4.25 Hagar stands for Mount Sinai: *some mss. have* Sinai is a mountain

EPHESIANS

1.1 *Some mss. omit* in Ephesus

1.23 who himself completes all things everywhere: *or* who is himself completely filled with God's fulness

PHILIPPIANS

2.6 to become: *or* to remain

COLOSSIANS

2.15 Christ freed himself from the power of the spiritual rulers and authorities: *or* Christ stripped the spiritual rulers and authorities of their power

3.6 *Some mss. omit* upon those who do not obey him

1 THESSALONIANS

4.4 how to take a wife: *or* how to control his own body

1 TIMOTHY

2.15 she perseveres: *or* they persevere

3.2 have only one wife: *or* be married only once

3.11 Their wives: *or* Women helpers

3.12 have only one wife: *or* be married only once

3.16 by the Spirit: *or* in spiritual form

2 TIMOTHY

1.12 what he has entrusted to me: *or* what I have entrusted to him

3.16 All Scripture is inspired . . . and is useful: *or* Every inspired Scripture . . . is also useful

TITUS

1.6 have only one wife: *or* be married only once

HEBREWS

11.11 Abraham able to become a father even though he was too old and Sarah herself was unable to have children: *some mss. have* Sarah herself able to conceive even though she was too old to have children

JAMES

4.5 The spirit that God placed in us is filled with fierce desires: *or* God yearns jealously over the spirit that he placed in us

2 PETER

3.10 vanish: *some mss. have* be found; *other mss. have* be burned up; *one ms. has* be found destroyed

JUDE

5 the Lord: *some mss. have* God; *other mss. have* Jesus

REVELATION

12.18 And the dragon stood: *some mss. have* And I stood, *connecting this verse with what follows*

15.3 all nations: *some mss. have* the ages

22.21 all: *some mss. have* God's people; *others have* all of God's people

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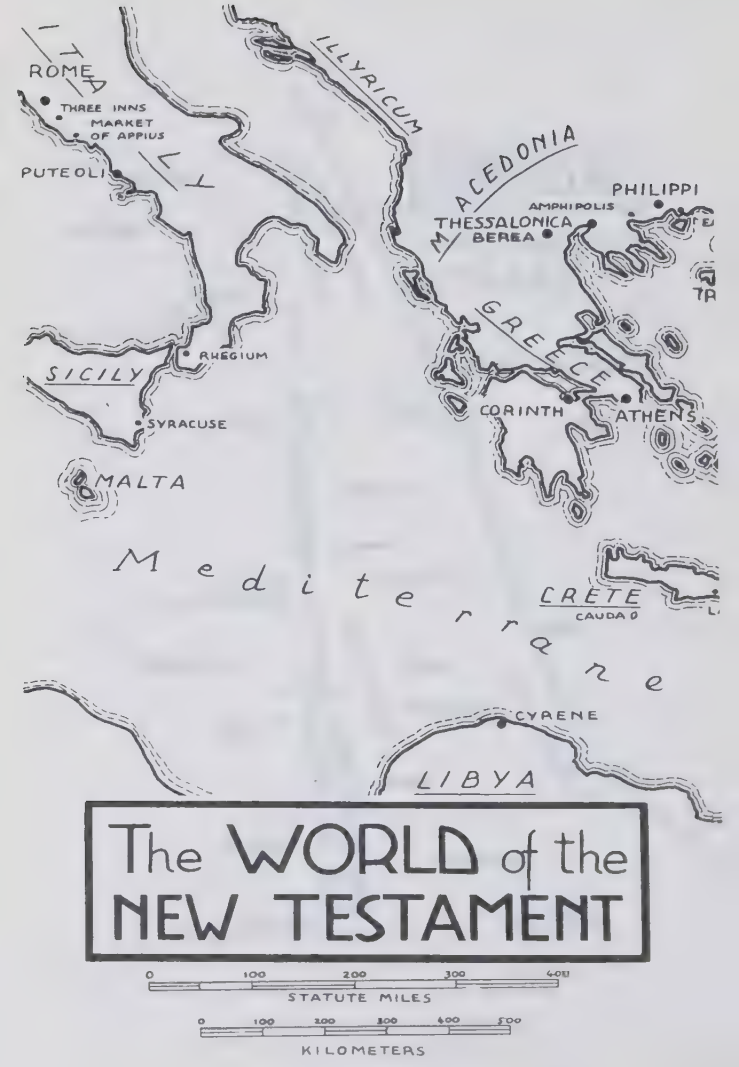
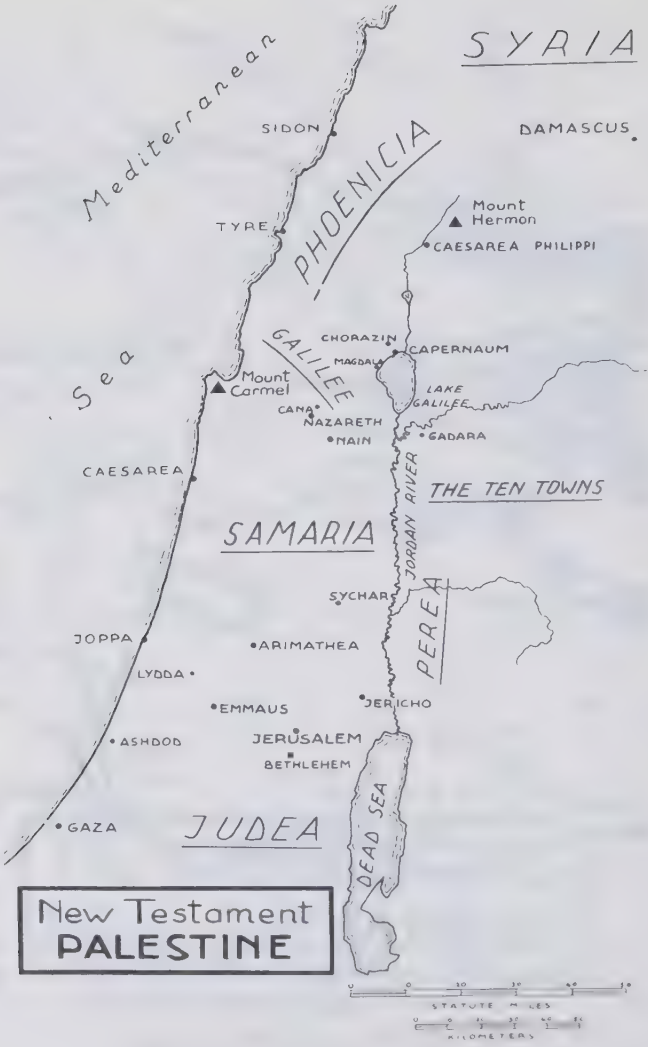
MAPS

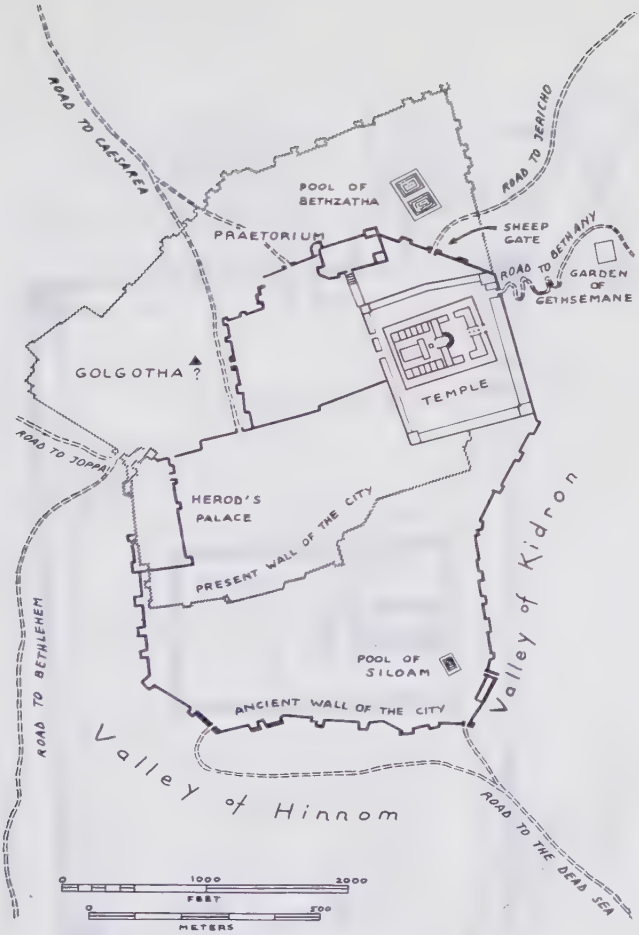
Old Testament
PALESTINE
0 10 20 30 40 50
STATUTE MILES
0 10 20 30 40 50
KILOMETERS
Sidon
PHOENICIA
Lebanon Mountains
ARAM
Damascus
Tyre
Mount Hermon
BASHAN
Mediterranean
Sea
Mount Carmel
Sea of Galilee
Megiddo
Jordan River
Samaria
Shechem
Penuel
Jabbok River
Joppa
CANAAN
AMMON
Bethel
Jericho
Jerusalem or Zion
Mount Nebo
PHILISTIA
Dead Sea
Gaza
Hebron
JUDAH
MOAB
Beersheba
NEGEB
EDOM


ITALY
ROME
THREE INNS
MARKET
OF APPIUS
PUTEOLI
ILLYRICUM
MACEDONIA
PHILIPPI
AMPHIPOLIS
THESSALONICA
BEREA
GREECE
CORINTH
ATHENS
SICILY
RHEGIUM
SYRACUSE
MALTA
Mediterranean
CRETE
CAUDA
CYRENE
LIBYA
The WORLD of the NEW TESTAMENT
0 100 200 300 400
STATUTE MILES
0 100 200 300 400 500
KILOMETERS

Black Sea
BITHYNIA
PONTUS
GALATIA
MYSIA
CAPPADOCIA
PERGAMUM
THYATIRA
ASIA
SMYRNA
SARDIS
PHILADELPHIA
ANTIOCH
EPHESUS
HIERAPOLIS
ICONIUM
LAODICEA
COLOSSAE
LYSTRA
MILETUS
PATMOS
DERBE
TARSUS
PAMPHYLIA
PERGA
ATTALIA
LYCIA
MYRA
CILICIA
ANTIOCH
CAPE SALMONE
CYPRUS
SYRIA
DAMASCUS
SIDON
TYRE
Sea
CAESAREA
JOPPA
JERUSALEM
GAZA
PALESTINE
ALEXANDRIA
EGYPT
ARABIA



New Testament
PALESTINE



JERUSALEM
and its surroundings

PLAN OF
HEROD'S TEMPLE
AT JERUSALEM
0 10 20 50 100 150 meters
0 50 100 200 300 cubits
CASTLE of ANTONIA
North Gate
West Gate
COURT OF THE GENTILES
Golden Gate
WARNING WALL
COURT OF ISRAEL MEN
WOMEN'S COURT
Priests Court
Porch
Beautiful Gate?
TYROPOEON VALLEY
WESTERN WALL referred to today as the Wailing Wall
Altar of Burnt Offering
HOLY PLACE
HOLY of HOLIES
SOLOMON'S PORCH?
KIDRON VALLEY

FGC N 66